Da'wah Bitesize

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In The Name Of Allah, The Most Merciful,
The Bestower Of Mercy

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡمُدَّثِّرُ ١ قُمۡ فَأَنذِرۡ ٢ وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرۡ ٣
وَثِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرۡ ٤ وَٱلرُّجۡزَ فَٱهۡجُرۡ ٥
وَلَا تَمۡنُن تَسۡتَكۡثِرُ ٦ وَلِرَبِّكَ فَٱصۡبِرۡ ٧

O you enveloped in garments! Arise and warn! And magnify your Lord! And purify your garments! And keep away from the idols! And give not a thing in order to have more. And be patient for the sake of your Lord! [74:1-7]

Preface

The is a humble effort to capture the da'wah principles and methodology as practised by the prophets ﷺ, sahaba ﷺ and their true followers throughout the ages. The primary sources of this compilation are Qur'an, Hadith and Seerah as elucidated by various well-known ulama of da'wah, in particular, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Khandlawi ﷺ, Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Khandlawi ﷺ and Maulana Muhammad Umar Palanpuri ﷺ.

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There is no god but Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

Allah ﷻ is our creator. He is the supreme creator & sustainer of the whole universe and everything inside it, whether we see it or not. Bringing eman in Allah ﷻ entails belief in Him with all His names and attributes.

Allah ﷻ was not dependent on any other being to create this universe or any creation within it. He did not consult anybody for this to come into existence and it didn't tire Him in any way. He gave life & nobody-else can give life. Allah ﷻ is fully aware of the needs of all His creations, He guides them, and He is the only one who sustains them.

Creations are finite in space and time - they are dependant on Allah ﷻ for their coming into existence, sustenance & demise. Human beings and jinns are no different, except that they will face the Day of Judgement after their temporal life in this world and then divided into eternal dwellers of Jannah or Jahannam. In this worldly life Allah brings into existence their deeds, good or bad, and they remain accountable for the intentions they make and the deeds they perform.

Allah ﷻ desires success for humans and jinns in this life as well as the next. Thus He has bestowed on them all the means of guidance: soundness of body & mind; ability to exert intellect & limited free will; good and bad conditions to be grateful, patient & reflective; and thousands of prophets and messengers. The most important of their messages is: لاَ اِلَهَ اِلّا اللّهُ.

Unlike other prophets and messengers, who were sent to a particular tribe or locality, Muhammad ﷺ came as the final messenger of Allah - he ﷺ is the universal messenger for all humans and jinns to come before the Day of Judgement. Muhammad ﷺ came to complete the message:

لاَ اِلَهَ اِلّا اللّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُوْل اللّهِ

There is no god but Allah and Muhammad ﷺ is the messenger of Allah.

This statement is the foundation of Islam. It's not a mere statement - a firm eman & yaqin on this kalima will unlock the means to profoundly shape the lives of individuals, communities and nations. This only occurs when its deepest meanings are internalised. Thus sahaba ﷺ spent thirteen years in Makkah, talking about it, listening about it, getting persecuted for bearing it. They became the leaders in belief, worship, behaviour and perseverance to such an extent that Allah used them to bring eman, peace, security & honour to many nations beyond Makkah. While some were raised for bearing it, many other mighty nations were debased for opposing it!

Thus we must understand its meaning the way sahaba ﷺ understood it and go through the same struggle & sacrifice that they went through to take benefit from this statement as they benefited and benefited others.

Allah ﷻ created us with weaknesses and needs. Our biggest weakness is that, left alone with our own devices - our understanding of reality, the reality of our existence, the reality of the cause and effects of events - is only shaped by what is apparent to us.

Our perception of hearing, seeing, touch etc. are severely limited. Our knowledge is limited and defective, whereas the knowledge of Allah is complete and all-encompassing. We see a dynamic view of our surroundings in incredible resolution as our brain recognise in real-time and interpret what we see, yet we cannot see beyond a wall or behind our head. We hear, recognise and recollect a vast array of sounds from a young age, and yet fail to listen to several people at the same time.

Our senses have direct links to the heart. Any information that enters our body through our senses or mind which provokes thoughts or gets interpreted - it leaves an experience and some eventually turn into beliefs which can settle in the heart over time. This belief then drives the person.

The belief resides at the centre of the heart - it then directs all actions of the limbs just like the army general who commands the footsoldiers. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Beware! There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body becomes good but if it gets spoilt the whole body gets spoilt and that is the heart [3, 4].*

The following anecdote illustrates this process of how yaqin or certainty of the heart takes root:

A baby, seeing its mum feeding day in day out, will rely on mum for food. Similarly, the mum, seeing her husband bringing food every day, will consider him the provider. The husband, in turn, will have built the belief that it's the hard work, the job that is the provider. Here all three individuals are seeing three different providers. This is the apparent system of the world that everyone sees but this understanding is profoundly flawed.

Here all three individuals were developing corrupt beliefs upon means. In reality:

- Allah created this apparent system for the sustenance of all three. Had Allah not created the love between the child and parent, had Allah not created the systems within mum to produce and deliver milk of correct nutrients, tastes and temperature, had Allah not created the capacity in the husband to work, had Allah not grown vegetation beyond what farmers do, then none of them would have survived! Further, it is Allah, by His power & permission that one digests and takes benefit from the food and protects from its harm.

- Allah is the one who sends the rain from the sky - how it is formed and distributed? He is the one who brings gases to the plants and makes them excrete. It is Allah who puts qualities into the plants [1] to grow from seeds and produce pulses, vegetables and fruits etc.
  Consider the growth of a single grain of rice, from germination to maturity, from green to formation of husk consisting of hard materials like silica and lignin to protect the seed that matures and hardens inside. This process has been continuing from the first day Allah introduced the plant in the world. Indeed, it is from the signs of Allah.

- Their role was minimal. Did anyone perform research or planning or resourcing to develop say the love in the mother, the rice plants, water cycle etc.? There is no miniature factory behind each grain! No other creatures or the plants themselves have been involved in developing the system. In reality, these are from the hidden systems of Allah.

The three individuals may not be aware of the fact that their convictions are based on superficial observations! All three love the respective means (ie, mum, husband, job), they feel the need of those means to fulfil their internal needs, they fear the loss of those means and their heart is naturally inclined to seek these means. It's their environmentally-induced beliefs that condition their hearts to approach the means. Rather, it's Allah whose nearness they should have sought and appreciated - if only they knew that Allah is behind their apparent source of enjoyment, hope, fear & love! How many people Allah ﷻ sustains without mum, husband or job etc.? He sustained the Children of Israel without any work:

وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ ۖ فَانفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا ۖ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ ۖ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِن رِّزْقِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ

And [recall] when Musa prayed for water for his people, so We said, "Strike with your staff the stone." And there gushed forth from it twelve springs, and every people knew its watering place. "Eat and drink from the provision of Allah, and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption." [2:60]

يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ قَدْ أَنجَيْنَاكُم مِّنْ عَدُوِّكُمْ وَوَاعَدْنَاكُمْ جَانِبَ الطُّورِ الْأَيْمَنَ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّ وَالسَّلْوَىٰ

O Children of Israel, We delivered you from your enemy, and We made an appointment with you at the right side of the mount, and We sent down to you manna and quails. [20:80]

Thus man's belief goes into the apparent system and they remain aloof from divine will, even though it is Allah who brings both the apparent and hidden system into existence. They begin to talk about events happening because of such and such a thing instead of saying that it happens by His will. One feels that: "the more effort I make in earning money the more I will fulfil my needs". This is a trap that both Muslims and non-Muslims fall into - hence da'wah & reminder is necessary for maintaining correct yaqeen.

If the means fail to fulfil man's needs, they feel depressed, they commit suicide. This is because they do not realise that the need is not fulfilled by the effort of man but by the qudrah of Allah ﷻ. Money does not fulfil the needs of man, but Allah fulfils their needs with money or without money. So if there is a delay in rizq, we should not turn to haram sources. We must control our tongue and not say in one place (masjid) that "Allah ﷻ does" and another place (outside the masjid) that, "money does".

Allah is not dependant on means to fulfil their needs, it's just His way. We should leave means to fulfil the commands of Allah just as we approach means to fulfil the commands of Allah. It is Allah who commanded Nooh عليه السلام to build the ark even though Allah is not in need of the ark to protect Nooh عليه السلام and his followers. In the same way, Allah was not in need of Musa عليه السلام to hit the sea with his staff to split the water.

What's more, people begin to worship such objects and means, which they consider sources of sustenance, fear & hope, benefit or harm etc. Thus people worship fire, cows, jinns, mountains, money, power, fashion, influence and systems. In this way, they make the environment the object of their worship. Their hearts are saturated by the relations connected to that environment - because of the relentless reminders they receive about these means and materials from childhood and which continues until they die, the more reminders and the more effort they make for these the stronger their false belief becomes.

The demand of the deen is that whatever we see, eg. power, authority, technology, are ultimately just deceptions, and so must be negated. Our intellect informs us that our rizk is on earth but Allah informs us that it descends from the sky:

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ

> And in the heaven is your provision and that which you are promised. [51:22]

Those who rely on eyes, ears and intellect instead of revelation are deceived, their faculties fail them again and again. History is replete with their examples: Pharaoh, Qarun and Haman, to name but a few - none of them failed to amass means but to no avail. Pharaoh was deceived by his own power. The nation of Sabah was deceived by their gardens. Whether individual or society, when deceived, they must get the result of it!

In surah Kahaf Allah mentioned some beautiful stories which illustrate how the reality can be totally opposite to what is apparent. What appears to be a strength could be a weakness in reality and vice versa, and what appears to be a calamity could be an opportunity and vice versa, and what appears to be freedom could be slavery in reality and vice versa.

Hunger is not removed by the food but by Allah, thirst is not quenched by water but by Allah. Sleep comes from the treasures of Allah and not from the luxury mattress. We are not protected against the cold by the blankets or warm clothes but by Allah. In the same way all means are incapable of manifesting its qualities and achieving its goals to benefit or harm without the permission of Allah ﷻ.

Sahaba ﷺ are the prime example in front of us when it comes to correctly dealing with means. Their yaqin was not on means, rather on the creator of means. When Rasulullah ﷺ called sahaba ﷺ to prepare for the Tabuk expedition, the munafiqs begun to taunt and put fear into the hearts of sahaba that this was going to deprive them of the harvest for which they worked all year round. The sahaba ﷺ had the perfect reply to that, who said, "We are leaving rizk and going to Razzak."

In this manner whenever the command of Allah comes, we should sacrifice whatever we are attached to. We get a training for this daily, we leave our jobs, shops, sleep, relations etc. to pray, to assert that Allah is our sustainer, الرَّبّ, that is the true tawheed ar-rububiyah. If we uphold what we say in salat, "الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ", "سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ" and "سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الأَعْلَى" in our life outside salat, only then we can hope to correctly answer the first question in the grave, "مَنْ رَّبُّكَ؟." The more people sacrifice like this the more they will progress towards sound yaqin and clean their hearts of taghut and false belief.

Ibrahim عليه السلام negated stars, sun, moon etc. Those who do not negate these objects or creations become worshippers of them. Everything will give da'wah to Allah, if we care to ponder. Eg. sun says, "Allah created me to shine." So, by witnessing: لآ اِلَهَ اِلّا اللّهُ, one negates all kinds of deity and at the same time asserts that Allah is the doer of each and everything and only Allah deserves all manners of worship.

The mushriks of Makkah believed that Allah is our creator and sustainer even before Muhammad ﷺ started preaching. The greatest sin they were

involved in was associating partners with Allah, in that they made means or intermediaries a condition for Allah.

When eman is low, and yaqeen is corrupt, and no effort of their rectification is made, then even Muslims will make means and intermediaries necessary conditions for Allah to do anything just like the way mushriks of Makkah made 360 idols intermediaries, each one to fulfil a particular need. These same Muslims will also behave like the munafiqs of Madina who were putting fear into the hearts of the Muslims about poverty before Tabuk expedition.

So, we negate what is apparent, that is the first part of the above statement, لاَ اِلَهَ. To summarise:

- لاَ اِلَهَ negates our observations (*mushahada*). Only Allah ﷻ knows the truly reality, thus we seek guidance from Him.
- لاَ اِلَهَ negates any form of deification of means, thereby freeing humanity from the servitude of creation.

This witnessing is also incredibly empowering, as it builds a firm relationship with Allah ﷻ by keeping our sight locked on the almighty Allah rather than on the strength or weaknesses of our means. This is so because whatever the status of the means it is still dependent on Allah to do anything.

When Allah ﷻ is with us then we are strong even if we lack all the means but if we do not have Allah ﷻ with us then we are weak even if we have all the apparent means.

Maulana Yusuf Kandhlawi ؒ said:

> Anything or any being other than Allah ﷻ that has an effect in the heart (which must be taken out), Allah ﷻ will bring that under the feet. The effect of other than Allah ﷻ, which is still in the heart (eg. love fear of money, fame, property), Allah ﷻ will enslave the person to that thing.

He also said:

> Don't make things the object of your worship, don't place your hope on things. Don't get drawn to structure, they can't do anything. It happens by the master of all things, it happens by the master of all structures. Learn about Him, know Him, obey Him.

2

Muhammad ﷺ is the Final Messenger of Allah

Allah ﷻ said in the Qur'an:

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

Verily, there has come unto you a messenger from amongst yourselves. It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He is anxious over you for the believers (he is) full of pity, kind, and merciful. [9:128]

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Indeed in the messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much. [33:21]

Jews who settled in Madina have long been waiting for his arrival. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ ۖ

Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) recognise him as they recognise their sons. [2:146]

Rasulullah ﷺ was sent as the mercy for the whole universe, he is the seal of prophethood. His mission was to propagate the beautiful deen of Allah ﷻ to both jinn and man. Allah ﷻ sent him to expound the meaning of Qur'an [2], to be role model [3], to legislate [4] (not lawgiver) and to be obeyed [5].

Following sunnah of messenger Muhammad ﷺ in performing any kind of worship is a precondition for its acceptance by Allah ﷻ. In order to achieve the success of this life and next we must follow his footsteps - this is the second part of the statement, "مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ."

We should implement the sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ in every way possible:

- Sunnah in appearance and habits
- Sunnah in the manner of dealing with others
- Sunnah in worship
- Sunnah in fikr, the purpose for which he was sent.

For the sake of this mission he went through the most difficult tests in life: orphanhood, ridicule, hunger, fear, social & economic boycott, war, betrayal, attempts at his life, stoning by street urchins, persecution of his companions & divorce of his daughters etc. He had to flee Makkah as a fugitive and emigrate to Madina.

Taariq bin Abdillah ﷺ narrated that he was in the Dhul Majaaz marketplace when a man passed by wearing a shawl with red threads. He was saying to the people, "0 people! Say 'Laa Ilaaha Illallah' and you will be successful." He was being trailed by another man who had injured former's heels and legs, causing them to bleed. The second man was saying, "0 people! Do not follow him because he is a liar!" The first person was prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the person following was his own uncle, Abu Lahab.

Once Rasulullah ﷺ was offering prayers at the Ka'ba. Abu Jahl and his comrades conspired to put camel entrails on the back of Rasulullah ﷺ when he went to sujud. So when the most unfortunate of them did so they started laughing and falling on one another. Rasulullah ﷺ could not lift his head up till Fatima ﷺ came and threw entrails away from his back. Rasulullah ﷺ said thrice, "*O Allah! Punish Quraish.*"

He further made dua: "*O Allah! Punish Abu Jahl, 'Utba bin Rabi'a, Shaiba bin Rabi'a, al-Walid bin 'Utba, Umaiya bin Khalaf, and 'Uqba bin al-Mu'it ….*

‘Abdullah bin Mas‘ud ﷺ said that he saw the dead bodies of those criminals were counted by Rasulullah ﷺ in the Qalib (well) of Badr [3].

Allah ﷻ protected Rasulullah ﷺ and aided the Muslims with angels and many miracles to strengthen the believers and establish this deen till the Hour. Victory only comes from Allah ﷻ. This is why after the conquest of Makkah Rasulullah ﷺ was uttering the following dhikr while ascending the mount Safa:

لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ أَنْجَزَ وَعْدَهُ وَنَصَرَ عَبْدَهُ وَهَزَمَ الأَحْزَابَ وَحْدَهُ

> None has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, with no partner or associate; His is the dominion, all praise is due to Him, He gives life and causes death and He is able to do all things. None has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone; He has no partner or associate, He fulfilled His promise, granted victory to His slave, and defeated the Confederates alone [7].

The Quraish didn’t leave any stone unturned to stop the da’wah of Rasulullah ﷺ. They even tried to entice him with money, power & women. Rasulullah ﷺ emphatically told his uncle Abu Talib: “*O my uncle! by Allah, if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left on condition that I abandon this course, until Allah has made me victorious, or I perish therein, I would not abandon it.*”

We cannot be successful without following the guidance brought by Rasulullah ﷺ and imitating his sunnah. Related by Abu Hurairah ﷺ:

> Rasulullah ﷺ said: “*All my followers will enter Jannah except those who refuse.*”
> When sahaba ﷺ enquired what he meant by refusal Rasulullah ﷺ said: “*Whoever obeys me will enter Jannah and whoever disobeys me has refused [3].*”

Sahaba ﷺ sought to implement sunnah in their lives the most meticulously. Zayd ibn Aslam relates that he saw Ibn Umar ﷺ performing salat whilst the buttons of his garment were open. He enquired about this and Ibn Umar ﷺ informed him that he had witnessed Rasulullah ﷺ performing salat in that manner on one occasion [6].

Allah ﷻ promised His love and forgiveness in following the footsteps of Rasulullah ﷺ:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Say [O Muhammad]: If you (really) love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. [3:31]

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

There is no believer but I, of all the people, I am the closest to him both in this world and in the akhira. Recite if you wish [3]:

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ ۖ

The Prophet is closer to the believers than their selves… [33:6]

So if a believer (dies) leaves some property then his relatives will inherit that property; but if he is in debt or he leaves poor children, let those (creditors and children) come to me, for them I am his sponsor [3].

Ahead of you there lie days of patience, during which being patient will be like grasping a hot coal. The one who does good deeds then will have a reward like that of fifty men who do such deeds.
Someone asked: O Messenger of Allah, the reward of fifty of them?
He said: "*The reward of fifty of you* [7]."

Following a thing becomes easy when one loves that thing. The love that sahaba ﷺ had for Rasulullah ﷺ is unprecedented, regardless of their background - men, women, or children.

A woman from the tribe of Banu Deenar lost her husband, father and brother in the battle of Uhud. When she was informed of this, she asked "But what happened to the Prophet?" The people replied: "All praise is due to Allah, he is as safe as you would wish him to be." She replied: "Show him to me so that I can see for myself," so the people pointed him out. When she saw him, she said: "Any disaster besides that of losing you is insignificant."

Once a man came to Rasulullah ﷺ and said, "O Rasulullah ﷺ! You are dearer to me than my family, my children and even myself. Sometimes I am sitting in my home and I remember you, and then I am overwhelmed with the desire

to come and see you. When I think about your death and mine; I realise that when you die you will be at the rank of the prophets in Jannah, but I fear that if I enter Jannah, I will not be able to see you."

Rasulullah ﷺ did not answer this man until Allah revealed the verse [8]:

وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ ۚ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا

> And whoever obeys Allah and the messenger, then they will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed His grace, of the prophets, the siddeeqs, the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are! [4:69]

Rasulullah ﷺ further said:

> *By Him in Whose Hands my life is, none of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father, and his children and all mankind* [3].

> *One who is indifferent to my sunnah has no relationship with me [3].*

Imam Malik ﷺ said:

> The sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ is like the Ark of Nooh ﷺ. Whoever embarks upon it reaches salvation and whoever refuses is drowned [9].

A man from Khalid ibn Asid's family asked 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, "Abu 'Abdur-Rahman! We find the Fear Prayer and the prayer at home in the Qur'an, but we do not find the travelling prayer." Ibn 'Umar ﷺ said, "My nephew, Allah sent Muhammad to us when we did not know anything. We do as we saw him doing [20]."

Today we are doing things the way we want, eg. in weddings from morning till evening every arrangement is causing immodesty, no pordah, what does this show to Allah? Today the more problems people solve, even more problems start, that's because man's foundation is wrong.

The only effective way to remove and purify our lifestyle of bid'ah or reprehensible innovation into deen is to introduce sunnah. When sunnah is implemented bid'ah will find no room to stay just as darkness cannot withstand light. We will never be able to do more than just imitate him.

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *I have not left anything that will bring you closer to Allah and distance you from the Jahannam, except that I have commanded you with it. And I have not left anything that will bring you closer to the Jahannam and distance you from Allah except that I have forbade you from it* [10].

Things taught by Rasulullah ﷺ are of the highest calibre material. In it is tremendous power. It nurtures in the fundamentals as well as in branches and sub-branches of deen. If your intention is for branches and sub-branches and things low in the sight of Allah, then it will still be blessed from that power, and be educated as Rasulullah ﷺ taught this as well. But make intentions for the fundamental teachings so that you do not deprive the ummah or yourselves of higher purpose and benefits by getting caught up with with lower level effort [16].

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz ﷺ said [20]:

> Rasulullah ﷺ made a sunnah and the people in command after him made sunnahs. To adopt them is to confirm the Book of Allah and to act on them is to obey Allah and strengthen the deen of Allah. It is not for anyone to change the Sunnah or alter it or to look into the opinion of those who oppose it. Whoever follows it is guided. Whoever seeks help by it will have victory. Whoever opposes it and follows other than the path of the believers, Allah will entrust him to what he turns to and will roast him in Jahannam, what an evil end.

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said:

> "وأشهد أن محمدا رسول الله". The fact that Allah is the greatest, in whose hand is the creation and destruction, success and failure, we do not know how to benefit from His qudrati power. We are blind in this path, Muhammad ﷺ is the guide, he is the messenger of Allah, only by following his way, we can receive the beneficence and mercy of Allah. Through the life-style of Rasulullah ﷺ we will find Allah ﷻ, our condition will be rectified. On the contrary, if we follow our lives according to the way of Jews and Christians then our condition will only get worse.

3

Allah ﷻ Does Each and Everything, Creation Cannot do Anything Without the Will of Allah

In this universe, whatever Allah ﷻ wishes, happens.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِمَا يُرِيدُ

Verily, your Lord accomplishes whatsoever He intends. [11:107]

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ

Verily! Allah does what He wills. [22:18]

وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

When He decrees a matter, He only says to it: "Be!" – and it is. [2:117]

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ

Verily, Allah does what He wills. [22:14]

Allah ﷻ creates whatever He wills. He creates whenever & however He wills. He wished to create this universe; skies, stars, galaxies, sun & moon and time etc. and it came to be.
He wished to create the trees, rivers & mountains, gold & silver, land & sea etc. and it all came to be.
He wished to create animals, fish, birds & bees, milk & honey etc. and it all came to be.
He wished to create life & death, happiness & sadness, love & hate, pain & pleasure, envy & pride, disease & cure etc. and it all came to be.

It is only Allah ﷻ who has the characteristic of doing whatever He wills. Everything happens by the command of the Lord.

بَلَىٰ إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Yes, He surely is Able to do all things. [46:33]

وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۖ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

He created all things and He is the All-Knower of everything. [6:101]

And how amazing is the way Allah ﷻ creates? Simply look at the cow - how it eats GREEN grass and generates YELLOW urine, RED blood and WHITE milk. All these have different benefits, tastes and smell yet they do not spoil each other's qualities while running side by side!

There is no interference of man's effort or intelligence in outcomes. If Allah wills wealth for an ignorant and poverty for an intelligent person, then this will happen. We are ignorant of our Lord, therefore we think it is happening by other than Him.

The brothers of Yusuf ﷺ planned to rid themselves of him but Allah protected him and eventually humbled the brothers in front of him. Similarly, when the wife of the chief minister of Egypt, Aziz, tried to seduce Yusuf ﷺ, Allah opened the door which was locked in front him as he ran away from her. Yusuf ﷺ who lived through all these humiliations never forgot Allah, he even gave da'wah while in the prison, then Allah ﷻ blessed him with an honourable position in the government.

Pharaoh wanted to secure his position by killing thousands of male babies of Children of Israel. His plan failed most miserably. There, Allah showed

how He can bring up Pharaoh's enemy inside his palace! Thus who runs which country is ultimately in the hands of Allah.

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ ۖ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

> Say: "O Allah! Possessor of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You will, and You take the kingdom from whom You will, and You endue with honour whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will. In Your Hand is the good. Verily, You are Able to do all things. [3:26]

When hunger struck during the Battle of Trench, Rasulullah ﷺ promised sahaba ﷺ wealth of three kingdoms: Sham (belonged to Roman empire), Persia and Yemen. Yet munafiqs and jews were mocking, "How can these people, stone tied to their stomach, dream of such wealth?" In due time, Allah ﷻ made this prophecy to realise even though it was inconceivable to the human mind!

Anas ibn Malik ﷺ reported that a person said: Allah's messenger, how the non-believers would be made to assemble on the Day of Resurrection (by crawling) on their faces? Thereupon he said:

> *Is He Who is powerful to make them walk on their feet is not powerful enough to make them (crawl) upon their faces on the Day of Resurrection?*

Qatada ﷺ said: Of course, it is so. (He adjured): By the might of our Lord [4].

Allah ﷻ explains Rasulullah ﷺ 's throwing of the sand on Quraish:

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ ۚ وَلِيُبْلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَاءً حَسَنًا ۚ

> And you did not kill them, but it was Allah who killed them. And you threw not, when you threw, but it was Allah who threw that He might test the believers with a good test. [8:17]

Here Allah created an action performed by Rasulullah ﷺ. This was a test of eman, as we need to relate it to Allah ﷻ. Allah states that He creates the actions that the servants perform and that whatever good actions they take, it is He Who should be praised for them, for He directed and helped them perform these actions [2].

All the created things are depended on the creator, Allah. He decides who gets just boys or just girls or both or neither. It is Allah who strengthened us with the power of speech, intellect etc. But He can take these powers back. Hence, we are in need of Allah's desire. Nobody can go to sleep or wake up without the Will of Allah. Allah made Uzair عليه السلام, a prophet, sleep for one hundred years while keeping his food warm and donkey dead - all three in three different states of existence - during which period He also regenerated the entire locality that was destroyed [11]!

Means are just creations and all creations are in need. All creations share four weaknesses:

- Creations need the Will of Allah to come into existence.
- Creations need the Will of Allah for sustenance.
- Creations need the Will of Allah to cease to exist.
- Creations need the Will of Allah to benefit or harm.

Just as every creation is dependent, so they can't do anything for each other. Money is dependent. Man is dependent. Money and man cannot do anything for each other as they are both dependants. It's like an invalid asking another invalid for help.

A water tap exposes water but delivers water only when connected to the main water reservoir. Similarly, things visible here in this world exposes the qudrah of Allah. Examples of these are all in front of us, within ourselves, in all the natural systems such as water cycle, in the land and in the sea, in the motion of celestial bodies, in food items on our plates and so on. Thus we bow down to the one who made them.

4

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Can Do Anything With Means, Without Means and Against Means

Means (*asbab*) are certain resources, materials, actions, capability, methods or systems by which a result is achieved. For example, medicine is used to treat diseases, water to quench thirst, warm clothes for protection against cold etc. By their nature, means are creations. Means can be apparent (worldly, jahiri) or deeni (hidden, batini):

Apparent Means - One can appreciate thousands of trees hidden in a single seed, growing eggs inside birds and bringing live chicks from those egg etc. Allah ﷻ creates and sustains these systems over and over again. These are from the signs of Allah. Yet people see the means which are apparent and do not see the power behind it. Thus people naturally develop beliefs around such means. They consider dignity, success in the apparent means, but alas! Allah ﷻ has not kept those things there.

Deeni Means - In contrast, deeni means are the beliefs and deeds of men which bring about their true success or failure - Allah kept success in deeni means but people fail to see it and thus prophets are sent. When the hidden system of Allah comes to support nothing can fore-

stall it. When Allah ﷻ willed to bring up Musa ﷺ in the palace of His arch-enemy Pharaoh, all the resources of then superpower and murder of thousands of young boys of Children of Israel could not prevent it!

The role asbabs play is not more than the role of a dinner plate upon which food is placed. The plates of happiness and sadness in this world are small and so small amount of it we see in this life. In the akhira the plates of happiness and sadness will be large and so the blessing or problems of the akhira will be large!

So in this sense, education is a plate, job is a plate, marriage is a plate, home is a plate, money is a plate, every kind of relationship is a plate and so on. Ultimately it is Allah ﷻ who bestows on the plates the quality of success or failure, benefit or loss, blessing or affliction etc. This then also means that we can never know, for sure, when something looks good is actually good or when something looks evil is actually evil and so forth. This is why we need guidance, we need to beseech everything from Allah ﷻ. And for the same reason revelation takes precedence over reason.

People's deception is like a mirage. This deception is also likened to reflection of the sun on pond water. Allah ﷻ is able to give wealth without us seeking after it, security without power. Allah ﷻ questions, "Who gives water? …spread the land? …created your body?"

Allah created the whole universe with His Will, without any means. He created Adam ﷺ without any father & mother.

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ ۞ أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۚ بَلْ لَا يُوقِنُونَ ۞

> Or were they created by nothing, or are they the creators? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather, they are not certain. [52:35-6]

Sahaba ﷺ - few in number, they hardly had any means, wearing tatty clothes, living in tiny houses, poverty was their norm but when the help of Allah came they were able to defeat the two superpowers of the time. Thus we must listen attentively, learn, practice and sacrifice upon the authentic knowledge of prophethood even if the system of the world or the so-called conventional wisdom is against it.

Allah ﷻ promised victory against enemies in Makkah which was fulfilled in Madinah. A'isha ﵂ used to recite the following verse in Makkah while still a young girl [12]:

سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ ۞

> Their multitude will be put to flight, and they will show their backs. [54:45]

In the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ warned us against relying on apparent means. Three such examples are:

- Yusuf ﵇ asked a fellow prisoner to mention him to the king with the hope that this will lead to an early release but the person forgot.
- Sulaiman ﵇ didn't say inshallah when he met his women, hoping a hundred boys will be born who will fight in the path of Allah.
- Son of Nooh ﵇ took shelter in the mountain to avoid the flood which was meant as punishment from Allah ﷻ.

All apparent means are traps (*fitnah*). Allah ﷻ created the means to fulfil our needs, not to corrupt our beliefs. We utilise means, but the condition is that our certainty must not be with it as the means cannot bring any benefit or harm except by the permission of Allah. In other words, there is no guarantee that the means will deliver success, but there is a guarantee of success with the support of Allah ﷻ. Similarly, there is no guarantee of failure with lack of means.

Man thinks, like the son of Nooh, Kanan, that he can escape the punishment of Allah ﷻ by some apparent means which are there by the virtue of His qudrah, eg going to a high mountain in case of a flood. But the manifest qudrah of Allah, in this case, was contrary to man's perception. Also, people think that majority would be successful but Nooh's minority succeeded.

People earning more than ever, yet they are going in debt, everybody: men, women, teenagers. They are after prestige, yet not getting it. This is a manifest failure of means. On the contrary, Allah ﷻ can give honour even inside jails as it happened with Yusuf ﵇.

If Allah wishes fire can burn and if He so wishes fire cannot burn. Ibrahim ﵇ was thrown in the fire but it did not burn.

Yunus ﷺ cried out from the belly of the fish. Being underwater is enough for death, being inside the belly of a fish is enough for death but he was inside both! He was in total darkness. Here more than one means for death was present but Allah ﷻ saved Yunus ﷺ against means.

In this world we will be tested again and again, in individual and collective life but the ultimate success is guaranteed with taqwa, patience and dua - all these three are deeni means:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۞ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۚ ۞

> And whosoever had taqwa of Allah, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him. [65:2-3]

وَالْعَصْرِ ۞ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۞ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۞

> By time, Verily! Man is in loss, except those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order *al-Ma'ruf*, and abstain from *al-Munkar*), and recommend one another to patience [13]. [103:1-3]

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *The honest and trustworthy merchant will be with the prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs* [14].

Ulama explain that this high status for the traders is because while sitting within the means of their sustenance they sincerely believe and say Allah ﷻ is our sustainer and establish His deen inside the business and the businesses do not prevent them from performing all the commands of Allah ﷻ. Thus the traders earned the high status, not through apparent means but hidden means.

Allah can cause birth where there is death and vice versa. He can sustain life when there no means of support to sustain life. He can let life be destroyed amid all the systems supporting life. Allah ﷻ can cause construction where human see destruction and vice versa. The "Big Bang" theory, if it is true at all, shows Allah ﷻ bringing about an incredibly complex universe from an explosion - we do not get flowers, cars, or smart-phones out of an explosion!

In surah Kahaf Allah ﷻ protected the young men and the dog against the elements for 300 years. Allah ﷻ covered up their sense of hearing. During this long period of time, their soul did not pass away, their body did not decay, they did not wake from sleep to urinate or defecate, their bodily hair, nails did not grow beyond normal. In fact, their complete sustenance is against the means by the qudrah of Allah ﷻ. Allah loved their concern for the protection of their eman, above all else, so much so that He narrated it in the Qur'an for all the people till qiyamah to reflect.

Allah ﷻ split the earth to destroy Karun but He split the earth to save the life of Ismael عليه السلام with zamzam water. Allah ﷻ disgraced and destroyed Nimrud and Pharaoh with their armies & kingdoms but He gave success and honour to Sulaiman عليه السلام and Zul-Karnain with their armies & kingdoms.

Success is not in wealth and materials - and failure is not from lack of wealth and materials. If success was in money and materials then Karun would have been successful. Success is in the hands of Allah. If He wants to give success, He can give success without money and materials. And if He wants to give failure, He can give failure even in the structure of wealth and materials [16].

Therefore we should not approach or leave means for its apparent capability to benefit or harm but we should approach or leave according to the command of Allah ﷻ. We get this training five times a day when we leave our preoccupation for salat, demonstrating that it's Allah who is our sustainer etc. This is same with all the commands of Allah ﷻ, in every aspect of life, whether personal or communal.

Allah ﷻ Gave Forms & Qualities of Everything Nothing is Beyond His Control

Allah ﷻ created the universe and everything within it. However, after their creation, Allah didn't just leave them to their devices. He is sustaining them, He is fully aware of their needs and conditions, nothing is beyond His grasp.

Whatever is created by qudrah is controlled by qudrah. Upon every structure, whether it is in the form of kingdom, or material, whether it's a matter of electricity and gas, that is subject to qudrah, and His power operates in them.

Allah ﷻ kept the systems of this universe in His control. Creation cannot solve their own problems, let alone solve others' problems. If Allah gives a problem in their body then they lose control. So how can this man solve the problems of the world?

Allah ﷻ changes the form and quality of creation. We see this in how our bodies evolved in the mother's womb, in the way babies grow to strength at youth and back to weakness at old age.

Allah ﷻ informs us in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ مُضْغَةٍ مُخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ ۚ وَنُقِرُّ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشُدَّكُمْ ۖ وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُتَوَفَّىٰ وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا ۚ

> O People, if you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then [consider that] indeed, We created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a clinging clot, and then from a lump of flesh, formed and unformed – that We may show you. And We settle in the wombs whom We will for a specified term, then We bring you out as a child, and then [We grow you] that you may reach your maturity. And among you is he who dies [young], and among you is he who is returned to the frail old age so that he knows nothing after having known. [22:5]

We see such dramatic changes in various other creations as well. The silk-worms undergo a process of metamorphosis from a maggot into a caterpillar, in which they appear to be different insects in each stage. In the first stage, the maggots' sole concern is to eat, and that is why Allah inspires their mothers to lay their eggs in a place where food is nearby.

We see in the growth of plants and bearing of the flowers and fruits the qudrah of Allah ﷻ. So many things must come in place for the farmer to reap the harvest. It is Allah who waters the plants and make it grow, only Allah knows how much sunlight and carbon-di-oxide are to be supplied. If one tries to find any grain in the rice plant before its due time they will see no sign of grain in it. Similarly, we see the qudrah of Allah in the growth and maturity of the fruits, how Allah ﷻ evolves it's colour, taste, smell, texture etc.

Among the examples we find in the Qur'an of how Allah ﷻ changed the quality of objects and means are:

Stick - Musa عليه السلام's stick became a snake and back to stick. Allah ﷻ turned twigs into swords for the sahaba رضي الله عنهم in the battle of Badr.

Water - Allah ﷻ created paths inside sea to make way for Musa عليه السلام and his people.

Stone - Musa ﷺ hit the stone and water came out. Saleh ﷺ made dua and she-camel came from a rocky mountain.

Human - Some among the Children of Israel were turned into apes and swine (a reversal of the Theory of Evolution!).

Earth - Allah caused the earth, which supports heavy weights and structures, to swallow Karun and his house.

In the case of Karun the earth opened up for destruction whereas in case of Ismaeel ﷺ earth opened up to provide zamzam water by the command of Allah. Regarding Karun Allah says:

فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِ وَبِدَارِهِ الْأَرْضَ

So We caused the earth to swallow him and his home. [28:81]

"Al-Bari" is one of the names of Allah. The meaning of al-Bari is "The Evolver", "The Developer."

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ

He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor of all things, the Bestower of forms. [59:24]

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Shortly before the Hour begins, people will be transformed into monkeys and pigs, swallowed up in the earth, and pelted with stones [7].*
>
> *Among this ummah those who disbelieve in the divine decree (al-qadr) will be swallowed up by the earth, transformed into monkeys and pigs or pelted with stones [5].*

These hadiths indicate that such transformations will happen in this ummah as a punishment for some sins. For example when singing-girls and musical instruments become widespread and wine is drunk [5]. Woe to the one who provokes the anger, wrath and vengeance of Allah. May Allah keep us all safe from the things that incur His punishment.

When Rasulullah ﷺ was emigrating with Abu Bakr ﷺ to Madina, Suraqa ibn Malik pursued him on horse-back. Rasulullah ﷺ made a dua against him, "*O Allah! Cause him to fall down.*"
As a result Suraqa's horse stumbled and he fell.

Allah ﷻ is fully aware of the creation and able to change their qualities:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۞

Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer, verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do. [16:97]

وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ۖ

But Allah ever encompasses the disbelievers. [2:19]

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا ۞

And whoever turns away from My remembrance, verily for him is a wretched life. [20:124]

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۖ

And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what you do. [59:18]

There are many instances when Allah ﷻ removed the qualities of the asbabs. Knife cuts but in the story Ismaeel ﷺ it failed to do so. Fire burns but in the story of Ibrahim ﷺ it was unable to do so.

قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۞

We said: "O fire! Be you coolness and safety for Ibrahim! [21:69]

Food and drink get spoilt over time but in the story of Uzair ﷺ, Allah ﷻ kept them fresh for over hundred years:

فَانْظُرْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ ۖ

Look at your food and your drink; they show no change. [2:159]

The nature of the eye is such that it can only see what is apparent, it cannot see the reality. If it is a physical body then it sees only the part of the structure that is visible to the eye, it cannot see the inside of the heart for instance. Because of this limitation, one can easily be fooled. We see in the case of a pencil in a glass of water the pencil is bent. This is how "science", which only investigates what is apparent, can trick some people and why it needs updating to conform to the evolved knowledge.

We see rain descending from the clouds, but it is Allah ﷻ who sends us rain:

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُزْجِي سَحَابًا ثُمَّ يُؤَلِّفُ بَيْنَهُ ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُ رُكَامًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِ وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ جِبَالٍ فِيهَا مِنْ بَرَدٍ فَيُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَصْرِفُهُ عَنْ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۖ

> See you not that Allah drives the clouds gently, then joins them together, then makes them into a heap of layers, and you see the rain comes forth from between them. And He sends down from the sky hail (like) mountains, and strike therewith whom He will, and averts it from whom He wills. [24:43]

The eye does not see the beginning or ending, it only sees the current state (excluding the distant galaxies and stars about which we can only see their distant past, not current or future state!). Every object began from the soil and will turn into soil. Eye didn't see the time when first it was soil, and it cannot see the time when it will turn into soil. But only sees the current state. When you see an object, then think it's nothing, by the qudrah of Allah it has taken this state, and one day it will be soil. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَىٰ ۞

> We created you from soil, and will return you to soil, then will take you out from the soil a second time. [20:55]

Think of yourself like this as well [16]. Thus we turn our certainty from nazar, نظر (evidenced by witnessing, science etc.) to khobar, خبر (revelation authentically handed down). Revelation takes precedence over reason.

… ★ …

6

For Every Creation Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ Created a Condition for it

Allah creates conditions and results. Allah ﷻ doesn't just create but He takes an active role in the guidance and condition of the creations.

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ ۞

> [Musa] said: "Our Lord is He Who gave to each thing its form and nature, then guided it." [20:50]

This type of guidance is given by Allah to all creations. By this guidance animals, plants and even inanimate objects fulfil the purpose of their creation. This type of guidance also includes the general intellect, wits, and inherent intuitive knowledge given to everyone.

Mujahid ﷺ said [15]:

> He guided man to distress and happiness, and he guided the cattle to their pastures.

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Every thing is predetermined, even laziness and intelligence [8, 4].*
>
> *Seek the help of Allah and do not succumb to feebleness. And when an affliction strikes you, say, "Allah has decreed this, and He does as He wills." Do not say, "Had I done this or that, this or that would*

have happened, because "if" opens the door wide for the work of shaitan [2]."

Nothing has been created without a purpose, these are signs of Allah - reflecting on these should increase our eman. Allah ﷻ has made many creations in pairs or with it's opposites, eg. life & death, day & night, heaven & earth, man & women, rich & poor, land & sea, light & darkness, intelligence & foolishness, Jannah & Jahannam [2].

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ۞

And all thing We have created in pairs, that you may reflect. [51:49]

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۞

Those who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire. [3:191]

Every moment of the 24-hours countless decisions of Allah ﷻ are manifesting in the people: happiness, sadness; success, failure; honour, disgrace; health, sickness; life, death; fear, hope; profit, loss etc. At every moment, He is growing the foetuses in the wombs, growing babies to strength & youths to their old age.

Nothing can interfere in Allah ﷻ's distribution of conditions. He is not limited by means or anything else. For example Allah ﷻ is not dependent on food to keep people alive. He kept ashab-e-kahaf in cave for more than 300 years in sleep. His Will prevailed upon them against all laws of natural science: controlling hearing, hunger, thirst and other systems within their bodies to sustain them in that time.

وَتَحسَبُهُم أَيقاظًا وَهُم رُقودٌ ۚ وَنُقَلِّبُهُم ذاتَ اليَمينِ وَذاتَ الشِّمالِ ۖ وَكَلبُهُم باسِطٌ ذِراعَيهِ بِالوَصيدِ ۚ ۞

And you would have thought them awake, whereas they were asleep. And We turned them on their right and on their left sides, and their dog stretching forth his two forelegs at the entrance. [18:18]

In contrast, in the story of Uzair ﷺ, Allah ﷻ gave death to him and gave life again after 100 years. He kept the food fresh and gave life to the donkey in front of him:

أَو كَالَّذي مَرَّ عَلىٰ قَريَةٍ وَهِيَ خاوِيَةٌ عَلىٰ عُروشِها قالَ أَنّىٰ يُحيي هٰذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعدَ مَوتِها ۖ فَأَماتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ ۖ قالَ كَم لَبِثتَ ۖ قالَ لَبِثتُ يَومًا أَو بَعضَ يَومٍ ۖ قالَ بَل لَبِثتَ مِائَةَ عامٍ فَانظُر إِلىٰ طَعامِكَ وَشَرابِكَ لَم يَتَسَنَّه ۖ وَانظُر إِلىٰ حِمارِكَ وَلِنَجعَلَكَ آيَةً لِلنّاسِ ۖ وَانظُر إِلَى العِظامِ كَيفَ نُنشِزُها ثُمَّ نَكسوها لَحمًا ۚ فَلَمّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قالَ أَعلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلىٰ كُلِّ شَيءٍ قَديرٌ ﴿٢٥٩﴾

Or like the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin. He said: "Oh! How will Allah ever bring it to life after its death?" So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him up. He said: "How long did you remain?" He (the man) said: "(Perhaps) I remained (dead) a day or part of a day". He said: "Nay, you have remained (dead) for a hundred years, look at your food and your drink, they show no change; and look at your donkey! And thus We have made of you a sign for the people. Look at the bones, how We bring them together and clothe them with flesh". When this was clearly shown to him, he said, "I know (now) that Allah is Able to do all things." [2:259]

Similarly, Allah ﷻ controls the conditions of nations:

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مالِكَ المُلكِ تُؤتِي المُلكَ مَن تَشاءُ وَتَنزِعُ المُلكَ مِمَّن تَشاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشاءُ ۖ بِيَدِكَ الخَيرُ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلىٰ كُلِّ شَيءٍ قَديرٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

Say: "O Allah! Possessor of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You will, and You take the kingdom from whom You will, and You endue with honour whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will. In Your Hand1 is the good. Verily, You are Able to do all things. [3:26]

However, Allah ﷻ has His sunnah in dealing with communities & nations - He does not change the condition of people unless they change what is within themselves. If people rectify their a'mals then Allah will bring better conditions for them and if they change for worse then Allah will deprive them of the blessings they enjoy.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۙ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۞

That is so because Allah will never change a grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their own-selves. And verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower. [8:53]

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَالٍ ۞

Verily, Allah will not change the (good) condition of a people as long as they do not change their state themselves. But when Allah wills a people's punishment, there can be no turning back of it, and they will find besides Him no protector. [13:11]

Allah ﷻ promises grace & salvation upon taqwa - this is how victory came to the Children of Israel against the Pharaoh and Help of Allah came in the battle of Badr to sahaba ﷺ against the mushriqins .

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَرَكَاتٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِنْ كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ۞

And if the people of the towns had believed and had the Taqwa (piety), certainly, We should have opened for them blessings from the heaven and the earth, but they belied (the messengers). So We seized them for what they used to earn. [7:96]

Such conditions, though connected to asbabs in this world, they are determined by Allah ﷻ and these decisions descend to all the creations in every second and every minute in the entirety of their lifetime. So we seek to redress our conditions through Him with correct yaqin and a'mal.

… ★ …

7

Benefit & Harm Lies in the Hands of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

Means are endowed with potency to benefit or harm, they can only do so by the leave of Allah ﷻ. Allah alone permits or brings benefit or harm. People see the means but they do not see Allah - generally, this is how people develop corrupt beliefs. Allah ﷻ does whatever He wills with His creatures, none can resist His judgment or prevent what He decrees:

وَإِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ وَإِنْ يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ ۚ يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۚ

> And if Allah touches you with hurt, there is none who can remove it but He; and if He intends any good for you, there is none who can repel His favour which He causes it to reach whomsoever of His slaves He will. [10:107]

Rasulullah ﷺ used to supplicate [3]:

اللَّهُمَّ لَا مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ، وَلَا يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ مِنْكَ الْجَد

> *…O Allah, there is none who can avert what You grant or give what You deprive, and no fortune ever helps the fortunate against You.*

Objects and things cannot harm or benefit except by the will of Allah. Here are some common examples:

Water - Water has the ability to quench thirst. In the story of Jalut (*Goliath*), Talut (*Saul*), when the army of Talut came to the river, Allah inspired him to test the Children of Israel, he ordered them to drink not more than one sip of water [16]. Those who disobeyed died as it only increased their thirst.

Medicine - Allah ﷻ has put power in medicine to give cure. However with the same medicine Allah chooses who it benefits and who it fails.

Cloud - The sight of cloud usually is an occasion of relief after a dry spell. With this water, Allah gives life to the dead land which brings out all sorts of crops. With the same cloud, Allah can give a disastrous flood for both life and property.

Money - The money which benefits the owner can also bring harm. A robber can kill the owner for money.

The objects, creations, systems and circumstances around us are like dummies - it will give benefit or harm depending on what Allah commands it to give. The staff of Musa ﷺ is a good example of this. Musa ﷺ described many benefits of the stick, which became an object of harm when it turned into a serpent. Then again the snake turned into staff by the will of Allah. In life, in general, every single asbab, which we consider to benefit or harm, is no different from the staff of Musa ﷺ - only Allah decides what they ultimately do.

A person with a gun in his hand is in need of Allah's protection. Allah protected Musa ﷺ in the house of His enemy. The brothers of Yusuf ﷺ planned to get rid of him, he was sold as a slave, he was put in prison for refusing the wife of the Egyptian minister but Allah protected and honoured him. Similarly, Quraish planned to murder Rasulullah ﷺ yet they failed to harm him when he left his house in front of his enemies who were fully armed. Nothing or no worldly power can terminate the life of anybody until they have finished the rizk that Allah allocated to them. When someone realises these examples, then it is easy to understand the true reality of power possessed by materials, machines, people and nations.

We should learn to treat all means no different than the idols about which Allah ﷻ said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَوِ اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ ۖ وَإِنْ يَسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لَا يَسْتَنْقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ۚ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبُ وَالْمَطْلُوبُ ۞ مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ۞

> Indeed, those you invoke besides Allah will never create [even] a fly, even if they gathered together for that purpose. And if the fly should steal away from them a [tiny] thing, they could not recover it from him. Weak are the pursuer and pursued. They have not estimated Allah His Rightful Estimate; Verily, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty. [22:73-4]

Allah ﷻ directed Rasulullah ﷺ to claim all powers of benefit and harm to Him:

قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ

> Say, "I hold not for myself [the power of] benefit or harm, except what Allah has willed. [7:188]

Misplacing the power of benefit and harm absolutely to creation can be tantamount to shirk. There are two types of shirk:

- Open (Jalli) - Worship of idols or something else thinking it will benefit or harm.
- Hidden(Kafi) - Man does not say business, money, job etc. are idols, but he thinks if he can please his boss or acquire money, he will be benefited. Like termites, such thinking is eating away at our eman.

Muawiya ﷺ used to take advise from A'isha ﷺ and she used to quote hadith of Rasulullah ﷺ. Once Mu'awiyah ﷺ wrote a letter to A'isha ﷺ that: "Write a letter to advise me, and do not overburden me." So A'isha ﷺ wrote to Mu'awiyah ﷺ :

> Peace be upon you. As for what follows: Indeed I heard Rasulullah ﷺ saying:
>
> *Whoever seeks Allah's pleasure by the people's wrath, Allah will suffice him from the people. And whoever seeks the people's pleasure by Allah's wrath, Allah will entrust him to the people. And Peace be upon you [5].*

Allah treats man the way he thinks of Him. Wahab bin Abaan Qurashi that once Ibn Umar ﷺ was travelling on a joumey when they saw a crowd of people standing by the road. "What is the matter with those people?" Ibn Umar ﷺ enquired. "There is a lion on the road frightening them," came the reply. Ibn Umar ﷺ got off his animal, walked up to the lion and held its ears. He then twisted its ears, slapped its nape and moved it off the road. Thereafter, he said (to himself) [17]:

> Rasulullah ﷺ did not lie to you. I heard Rasulullah say:
>
> *Only that which man fears will be given the upper hand over him and if he fears none besides Allah, Allah will not allow anything else to gain the upper hand over him. Man is also handed over to that which he entertains hopes in and if he pins his hopes in none other than Allah, Allah will not hand him over to anyone else.*

Rasulullah ﷺ said to ibn 'Abbas ﷺ while he was still a youth,

> *Young man, I will teach you something: Remember Allah and He will remember you. Keep Him in your heart and you will find Him with you. If you beg of someone, beg of Allah. If you rely on someone, rely on Allah.*
>
> *Know that if the whole world united in order to provide you with some benefit, they could only benefit you with what Allah has already decreed for you. And know that if the whole world united in order to bring you harm, they could only harm you with what Allah had already decreed to befall you.*
>
> *The pens have been lifted from the pages and the ink has dried* [5].

We thus turn to Allah to seek benefits and to ward off harm - we need to show our gratitude to Him. Allah ﷻ teaches us to acknowledge this many times a day:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۚ ۝

> You (alone) we worship, and You (alone) we ask for help (for each and everything). [1:5]

Even a husband would not tolerate if his wife tries to go to someone else to solve their problem (eg lack of food etc.). The husband would not tolerate this even though he didn't create eyes, ears, nose etc. Similarly, if someone

employs a person, then if the employee goes to do some other work - would the employer tolerate this? Similarly, Allah controls all of our affairs, the person we may plead to, even that person is in the Hands of Allah! So how do we expect Allah to tolerate our behaviour (in misplacing fear and hope)?

Nimrud bin Kan'an, a pagan king who ruled the whole world, wished to punish Ibrahim ﷺ for destroying the idols they worshipped. To punish him, a giant fire which only a state apparatus can afford was arranged, and people gathered around to witness. The king wanted to make Ibrahim ﷺ an example so that the pagan beliefs are never challenged. But Allah showed that the king cannot kill Ibrahim ﷺ even with huge planning and fire. Allah ﷻ protected and sustained Ibrahim ﷺ inside the fire.

We have to fear for our sins and nothing else. No need to fear any creations at all. Eman is belief in Allah ﷻ with fear and hope.

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Has Infinite Treasures Sahaba رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ Learnt to Take From it Directly

Whatever exists on the earth is finite but Allah ﷻ's treasures are infinite. For example, all water put together (past, present, future) is a drop compared to what is in the treasures of Allah ﷻ. Similarly, the stock of milk, honey, fruits etc. is a drop compared to what is in the treasures of Allah.

Every form of condition on a person, family, village, town, city, country, and the world is coming from the treasures of Allah ﷻ. It's from the treasures of Allah ﷻ that man gets peace, comfort and ease; man gets difficulty and stress; he gets happiness, he gets sorrow. This was and is and will continue to be the case until Day of Qiyamah. Whatever is available in this earthly life is not even a drop in Allah's infinite treasures.

وَلِلَّهِ خَزَائِنُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ۞

> And to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites comprehend not. [63:7]

Allah ﷻ is great and His jail for eternal punishment, Jahannam, is great.

Allah ﷻ is great and His place for eternal entertainment, Jannah, is great. The blessings and punishments of the hereafter not only exceed those of the earth in quantity, but also in quality!

Sahaba ﷺ had the firm belief in the fact that all creations, whether it is in the form of materials, means or conditions are all from the treasures of one supreme being, Allah ﷻ. Thus they focused all their attention to Allah ﷻ and His commands.

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *The early period of this Ummah attained salvation by virtue of its firm belief in Allah ﷻ and disregard for worldly things; the last of it will be damned through niggardliness and high hopes regarding distant future* [18].

Abu Umama ﷺ was in debt, he had no means to pay, he could not stay at home, he was staying in the masjid in grief. So Rasulullah ﷺ said, "*Shall I give you du'a through which Allah will relieve mountain of debt.*" Thus, he ﷺ trained his sahaba ﷺ that only Allah provides without measure and takes out of all difficulty and in ways unimaginable!

Once Abu Mu'liq ﷺ, who was a trader who traded both his own goods and goods of others. Once he faced a robber who wanted to kill him. So Abu Mu'liq ﷺ requested permission to pray two rakat of salat. Before he finished his dua an angel came and killed the robber [19].

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ reports:

> I followed Alaa bin Hadhrami ﷺ when Rasulullah dispatched him to Bahrain. I witnessed three incidents with him and I cannot tell which of them was most astonishing.
>
> When we stood by the shore on one occasion, he said, 'Recite Bismillah and lunge into the ocean.' We recited Bismillah, lunged in and crossed the sea without even the hooves of our animals getting wet.
>
> On the return journey, we had to pass through an arid plain and had no water with us. When we brought this to his attention, he performed two rakat salat and then made du'a. There suddenly appeared a cloud the size of a shield, which rained down

> so heavily on us that we had enough water to drink and to give to our animals.
>
> When he passed away, we buried him in some soft sand, but after travelling a short distance, it occurred to us that wild animals would (easily dig up the grave and) eat up the body. We therefore returned, but did not find his body in the grave [20].

Mu'aawiya bin Harmal reports that once he was sitting in the Masjid with Tameem Daari ﷺ when a fire was emerging from Harra. Umar ﷺ then came to Tameem ﷺ saying, "Go and see to that fire!"
Tameem ﷺ said, "Who am I and what am I?"
Umar ﷺ however insisted until Tameem ﷺ went with him. Mu'aawiya followed them as they proceeded to the fire where Tameem ﷺ rounded up the fire with his bare hands until it returned into the crevice it had come out from, with Tameem ﷺ behind it. Umar ﷺ then remarked, "The one who has witnessed this can never be like the one who has not [21]."

Once a Muslim army had to set up camp in one of the wild jungles of North Africa, in Kairouan. This jungle was filled with dangerous wild animals. The commander Uqbah bin Nafae ﷺ went with a few sahaba ﷺ to a certain spot, they made du'a to Allah and then made an announcement:

> 0 you creatures living in the earth and you wild animals. We are the companions of Rasulullah ﷺ. Please depart from here, for we intend camping here. Whoever of you we find here after this, we shall kill.

As this announcement was made, it was as if a bolt of lightning had travelled among the wild beasts and reptiles. Picking up their small ones they immediately departed from there.

When hunger struck during the battle Khandaaq, Rasulullah ﷺ promised wealth of three kingdoms. Yet munafiqs and jews were mocking - "How can these people, stone tied to their stomach, dream of such wealth?" Thus we need to work with steadfastness when difficulty comes.

Rasulullah ﷺ used to teach sahaba ﷺ to make istikharah, asking Allah to help one make a choice, in all things, just as he used to teach them surahs from the Qur'an [3, 5, 9, 7].

Rasulullah ﷺ brought many means from Allah ﷻ - when we implement sunnah in our lives, when our lives will embody that life style of Rasulullah ﷺ, then with every means:

- our relation with the supreme being Allah ﷻ will be built,
- we will benefit directly from His qudrah,
- Allah ﷻ will show success from every design, regardless of whether that design appear adequate or inadequate, of failure or success, of honour or disgrace!

Maulana Yusuf ؒ said:

> All our needs and problems have a due connection with Allah. These needs and problems do not have any connection with materials spread out in the markets. Our sight should not fall on materials.
> In the same way our thought should not be about them. If our sight falls on them we should consider those things as clay. If our hearts go out to those material things then how would the hearts of the people, to whom we are going to, will turn away from them?

Even today, if we are to take from the treasures of Allah, we should sacrifice upon fulfilling His commands in the way of Rasulullah ﷺ, persevere with patience and perform salat and make du'a in earnest. If we do not have eman we cannot benefit directly from the treasures of Allah - qudhra of Allah.

If everyone understands the one Lord and the treasures of the Lord then all problems will end. People will feel that, "Why should I steal or rip someone off?", their thinking will be that, "The one (Lord) who gave him, can give me from his vast treasures - so through salat I will take from Him."

Distribution of Rizk: Conditions & Means are all From Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ

Rizk has a general meaning - food, cloth, house, companion, transport and shelter etc. The distribution of conditions & means is only from Allah ﷻ. The blessings of this world are temporary and Allah gives these to believers and disbelievers as He pleases. Allah ﷻ said:

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ ۚ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ

Say (O Muhammad): "Who has forbidden the adoration with clothes given by Allah, which He has produced for his slaves, and the good [lawful] things of provision?" Say: "They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) exclusively for them (believers) on the Day of Resurrection." [7:32]

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَضْحَكَ وَأَبْكَىٰ

And that it is He (Allah) who grants laughter and tears. [53:43]

Nothing takes place on earth, except that it is inscribed in *al-Lawh al-Mahfudh* (Preserved Tablet); everything about the creation by Allah ﷻ; livelihood, provisions, ages, deeds, etc.

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Allah had written the ordained measures (and due proportions) of the creation, fifty-thousand years before the creation of the Heavens and the Earth… [4].*

Allah ﷻ enriches his enemies with means, with materials, but it can become a trial for them and others. It is a trial when they think their affluence is solely their own product and a sign that they are on the correct path.

وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ

> And strain not your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to various groups of them, the splendour of the life of this world that We may test them thereby. But the provision (good reward in the hereafter) of your Lord is better and more lasting. [20:131]

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ آتَيْتَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَأَهُ زِينَةً وَأَمْوَالًا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا رَبَّنَا لِيُضِلُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِكَ ۖ رَبَّنَا اطْمِسْ عَلَىٰ أَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاشْدُدْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوا حَتَّىٰ يَرَوُا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ

> And Musa said: "Our Lord! You have indeed bestowed on Pharaoh and his chiefs splendour and wealth in the life of this world, our Lord! That they may lead men astray from Your Path. Our Lord! Destroy their wealth, and harden their hearts, so that they will not believe until they see the painful torment." [10:88]

Rizk is not determined by the size of the population. Today population control is taking place. But Allah said to Quraish:

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِمْلَاقٍ

> Do not kill your children fearing poverty. [17:31]

Narrated by Anas ﷺ:

> My mother, Umm Anas, brought me to Rasulullah ﷺ and she had made me an Izár out of half of her head cover and had made the other half into a Ridâ'.
> She said: '0 messenger of Allah, this is Unais, my son. I have brought him to you to serve you, so pray to Allah for him.'

> He said: *'0 Allah, increase his wealth and offspring.*"
> By Allah, my wealth is great and today my children and my children's children are now more than one hundred in number.

Rizk is not exactly what is apparent. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *A servant says, My wealth, My wealth, but out of his wealth three things are only his: whatever he eats and makes use of or by means of which he dresses himself and it wears out or he gives as charity, and this is what he stored for himself, and what is beyond this (is of no use) because you are to depart and leave it for other people[4].*

Allah ﷻ will ask about the blessings we receive. Once a sahabi received some dates after three days, Rasulullah ﷺ said even for this they would be asked, even the shadow of a tree is a favour from Allah ﷻ.

The sunnah of Allah is that He gives rizk through apparent means, that is from land, through job or trade etc. He is not limited by the number or type of means or by circumstances to provide rizk.

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

> And no creature is there on earth but its provision is due from Allah. [11:6]

Allah ﷻ can feed the poor, rich man's food, and He can also feed the rich, the poor man's food. How many people are there who suffer from food allergies? There are others who cannot even digest good food. These are predetermined so that we can appreciate what we have and not focus on what we don't have. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Look at those who stand at a lower (financial) level than you but don't look at those who stand at a higher level than you, for this would make the favours (conferred upon you by Allah) insignificant (in your eyes) [4].*

Abu 'Abbas Sahl ibn Sa'd as-Sa'idi said [7]:

> A man came to Rasulullah ﷺ and said, "Messenger of Allah, show me an action for which Allah will love me and for which people will love me if I do it."
> He said, "*Do with little of this world and Allah will love you, and do with little of what belongs to other people and people will love you.*"

Allah ﷻ also gives without means. Maryam ؑ received fresh fruits in closed chambers - she didn't approach any means for that. Similarly, Allah ﷻ gave out of season grapes to Khubaib ؓ who was captured and kept caged in Makkah, he too received the rizk without means.

Thus a mumin will sacrifice time to beautify salaat, beautify a'mal, he will sacrifice asbab to do a'mal. On the contrary, a Muslim with weak eman will sacrifice salat, sacrifice a'mal to give more time to his business etc. Allah created asbab to test us - what level of yaqin do we hold about His rububiyat?

Mualana Yusuf ؒ said:

> Before death settle this in our heart that there is success in following the methodology of Rasulullah ﷺ and there is no success inherent in authority or in a piece of material. This dictum needs to open up within us. This is because when we die the first question we are going to face, "Tell who is your sustainer?"
>
> If we made effort on the saying that my business sustains me, we sustain from our own effort, money sustains me, then we will not be able to say that our sustainer is Allah. Whatever is inside the heart will come from the tongue, even if we say Allahu Akbar millions of times.

Promises & Qudrah of Allah سبحانه وتعالى are With Eman & A'mal, Not With Asbabs

The promises of Allah and His messenger is not with the people of Muslim names but with those who are mumins. Sahaba ﷺ had absolute certainly in getting from the promises of Allah ﷻ and Rasulullah ﷺ, far more than say our certainty in getting a salary or wages after doing some work.

The following conversations between Abdullah ibn Masud ﷺ who was on his deathbed and Uthman ﷺ illustrate how much yaqin sahaba ﷺ had on a'mals brought by Rasulullah ﷺ:

Uthman ﷺ: What illness do you have?
Ibn Masud ﷺ: My sins!
Uthman ﷺ: So what do you desire?
Ibn Masud ﷺ: The mercy of my Lord.
Uthman ﷺ: Can I get a doctor to attend to you?
Ibn Masud ﷺ: The doctor has made me ill.
Uthman ﷺ: Should I send some money for you?
Ibn Masud ﷺ: I have no need for money.
Uthman ﷺ: The money will assist your daughters after your demise.
Ibn Masud ﷺ explained, "Do you fear that my daughters will become poor? I have commanded them to recite Surah Waqiah ev-

ery night. I heard Rasulullah ﷺ saying, '*Whoever recites Surah Waqiah every night will never be afflicted by poverty [2].*'

Allah ﷻ can use any means to benefit anybody. Allah did not create asbab because He could not do without them. For those who have taqwa, Allah ﷻ provides in a way that is unimaginable:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۞ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ

And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. [65:2-3]

If we follow Allah, He will fulfil all the promises, ie. Allah will protect us. When we take interest, He will destroy us. We must have certainty in this. Allah ﷻ is always with the believers as He says:

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Allah is with the believers. [8:19]

Unfortunately, today if we say, "Allah will look after us", people get angry, eg. when a young man leaves a pregnant wife and says Allah will look after her, people get angry, "what nonsense!" etc.

Zakariya عليه السلام left Mariyam عليها السلام in the sacred room by the command of Allah. Allah ﷻ provided her with food. Later on, when she was by the date-palm tree during pregnancy, Allah asked her to shake the big tree. Mariyam عليها السلام did not use her reason such as it was a big tree and she was weak or in pain. On the contrary, she shook the tree because Allah commanded it. So when the command of Allah is heard we must do it. Shaitan says, "It's difficult or impossible."

How can one explain a young boy, how a baby comes out from the womb? Similarly, we are like that young boy, how can we understand the qudrah of Allah ﷻ? In the same manner when following his commands, if we have the yaqin then the help of Allah will come to us, whether we understand how.

There are no promises from Allah ﷻ upon relying on means, such as what Pharaoh relied upon. The Pharaohic doctrine is taught in the educational establishments - only now it's propagated on an industrial scale, and hardly anyone in this world is spared. They just want people to believe what is apparent in means, and so to acquire the most benefit acquire the most

amount of means. How many young people have broken their backs upon this? How many nations have been destroyed because of this? Only Allah promises the guarantee of benefit and harm and that is with His commands.

Sure Allah ﷻ has created asbabs for a purpose - they serve the following four purposes:

To know Allah ﷻ through His signs & qudrah: At the most basic level, we see the amazing system of life in this universe from the smallest to the largest creations which direct to their supreme creator. The way Allah evolves the creation during its creation (eg. in the womb) or in its lifetime (eg. growing old) shows off His qudrah. He created everything, He guided them, He sustains them, He gives the results of their effort, He gives success or failure, all are from the signs of Allah.

Asbabs are a test: Allah ﷻ can test us with means, either by giving or by withdrawing.

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۞

Verily! We have made that which is on earth as an adornment for it, so that We may test them as to which of them is best in deed. [18:7]

They are not created for our sustenance or rectification. For example, Allah is not in need of the means to sustain humans. He fed manna and salwa to Children of Israel.

Allah ﷻ can utilise them to raise or debase people: Means are like containers. Whatever Allah chooses to put on them will occur regardless of the outward structure or notion of them. Earth was split to benefit Ismail ﷺ but the same earth was split to bring destruction to Karun.

It is the sunnah of Allah that He uses the means and if He so wishes He doesn't. He asked Nooh ﷺ to make the boat, Musa ﷺ to hit the water. In the battle of Badr, Allah ﷻ sent Jibrael ﷺ to inform Muhammad ﷺ to throw a handful of sand at the enemy.

We submit to Allah: After looking at the splendour of His creations; the systems and means of this universe and recognising that these are powerless in their ability to exist, or to bring benefit and harm to anybody, we realise that these are just signs of Allah and His qudrah and we submit to Him.

Allah ﷻ kept the benefits of this deen in disguise. Hence when men get tests, sometimes they are deceived. If we do not achieve these (disguised) benefits, then the apparent benefits (false, eg interest) will come to us but with punishments.

Three people stuck in a cave were given freedom on account of their a'mals. Each person sought Allah's help by making dua sincerely by means of their a'mal and the boulder moved slightly each time. After all of their du'as, Allah ﷻ removed the boulder completely from the mouth of the cave.

The qudrah of Allah ﷻ is for those with yaqin, it is not just on a'mal, it is on the full yaqin of the outcome of a'mal. The strong eman & yaqin of sahaba ﷺ enabled them to resist the effect of any asbab on their heart and remain steadfast on their mission.

At the request of Rustam, Sa'd ibn Waqqas ﷺ sent Rab'ee bin Aamir ﷺ as his envoy. The court of Rustam had been decorated to impress him. There were cushions decorated with gold, rugs of silk, gleaming emeralds, priceless pearls and other elaborate decorations. Rustam wore his crown and other expensive garments and accessories as he sat on a throne of gold. Wearing old clothing Rab'ee ﷺ entered with his sword, his shield and undersized horse. He continued riding the horse, even trampling on the edges of the rugs. He then dismounted and tied his horse on one of the couches. He then walked along with his weapons and armour still wearing his helmet.

When the courtiers asked him to remove his weapons, he said, "I have not come of my own accord but have come on your request. Either leave me as I am or grant me leave." Rustam instructed them to grant him entry and he came with his spear, which tore most of the rug as he walked while leaning on it. The courtiers asked, "What brings you here?" Rab'ee ﷺ replied [15]:

> Allah has sent us to remove those whom He wills from the slavery of man to take them to the slavery of Allah, to remove them from the narrowness of this world towards its vastness and from the oppression of other religions towards the justice of Islam….

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said:

> Currently in this world effort is only made on materials or things related to it. People have forgotten how by acquiring taqwa, and by developing a pure relationship with Allah, they can take from Allah by his blessing and benevolence. Rather it is the way that is

sought in every supplication made in every salat, in every raka'a. This is the way of every single prophet, messenger, and those of His accepted slaves.

On the contrary, the people who are deprived of the guidance of Allah, and upon whom there is the punishment of Allah, their way is such that they are completely heedless of Allah, lacking yaqin upon His qualities, and His worship and help, who act as carefree, making an all-out effort on materials. Allah says about them:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَرَكَاتٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِنْ كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

And if only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth; but they denied [the messengers], so We seized them for what they were earning. [7:96]

If people's eman become rectified, their actions become accepted, their thinking become holy then Allah will bring good circumstances for them. Thus Allah gave victory to the believers on Day of Hudaybiyyah.
Further, when the sahaba ﷺ were content with acceptance and were at peace, Allah ﷻ increased their eman [2]:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

It is He who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers that they would increase in faith along with their [present] faith. And to Allah belong the Forces of the heavens and the earth, and ever is Allah Knowing and Wise. [48:4]

There are those who break the commands of Allah and yet appear to prosper, then this success will end at death at the latest. At death, their failure will fully manifest and will never end. As for believers, their poor conditions are not a sign of failure as their eternal bliss will begin at death.

When difficulties descend in this world then it is for the reformation of people, it is from the mercy of Allah. These small difficulties are for the people to reflect on and return to the servitude of their lord, thus saving from difficulties which are infinitely more severe and permanent.

Only With Firm Yaqin One can Leave Means for A'mal

The true nature of means is apparent to the person with correct yaqin. Having correct belief, *aqeedah*, is not sufficient to come on to a'mal. If the yaqin is weak it will fail to bring the person to a'mal.

There are three types of people who claim, "Allah does everything" yet they fail to benefit from the qudrah of Allah ﷻ:

- Mushriks - The mushriks of Makkah believed "Allah does everything" yet they used to associate partners to Allah. One mushrik thought Rasulullah ﷺ was under a spell and suggested that he is allowed to try certain wizardry after which Allah will give cure.
- Those who belief "Allah does but only with asbabs." Thus they set a condition on Allah's qudrah!
- Those who say Allah does but only with pious saints. They are despondent of the power of their own dua.

The consequence of weak eman is all around us and is so abundant nowadays. Eman is so weak that many people are unable to fulfil the most important command after eman. When someone misses salat while residing in the vicinity of the masjid, it does not mean they do not believe in Allah, it does not mean they do not hear the adhan, it does not mean they don't know how to do wudhu or salat, the problem is that their belief is in the tongue and it has not fully penetrated the heart.

As a child grows, it develops yaqin from the environment. He will prioritise various activities according to the yaqin at the heart. One may have the knowledge of the importance of certain activity and knows how to perform that activity yet he may not have the necessary strength or determination to successfully perform it. For example, a soldier may be required to carry a 35kg weight on his back for 12 miles. So to perform this he will lift weights to develop the higher stamina. Similarly, the higher the sacrifice or higher the test the stronger the yaqin needs to be. Thus yaqin requires developing.

When yaqin is weak, the person practices deen according to circumstances, when the condition is favourable then the person performs a'mal, as soon as the condition becomes difficult they leave a'mal. Their nature of deen is according to condition, not according to the commandments!

There are others who rely on means for dunya and a'mals for akhira - this is wrong. Dunya for Muslims is dar-ul-am'al, not just dar-ul-asbab. We are not supposed to leave asbab as everybody has to be tested with asbabs and with lack of asbabs. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۞

> Verily! We have made that which is on the earth as an adornment for it, so that We may test them as to which of them is best in deed. [18:7]

Thus first do the a'mals for the situations because promises are on them, then go to asbab. Rasulullah ﷺ directed one sahabi ﷺ to pray two rakats before travelling for business.

Allah ﷻ is the one who looks after and provides for us. We only approach job, food, medicine etc. simply because we are commanded to do - however, it's Allah who empowers these means to become potent. If someone has yaqin upon this then he will leave these means to fulfil commands of Allah - the a'mals of deen will not become a burden or getting in the way. So we approach and leave means for the sake of Allah. Five times a day we get a rehearsal of leaving means for a'mal when adhan is called we respond to it by leaving all pre-occupation.

So spending time with family is from deen but if it prevents them from other commands such as congregational salat then it's not from deen. A'isha ﷺ says that, "Rasulullah ﷺ would be sitting with us, when salat time would come he would get up as if he didn't even know us…"

Promise of benefit is not for those who practice according to circumstances. We must practice deen to please Allah ﷻ, not to remove condition. Yaqin on a'mal will make the person practice in all conditions. A'mal is only for Allah ﷻ, obedience is the right of Allah ﷻ and only this should be the intention of a'mal, not for benefit. Benefits are guaranteed, but purpose is the pleasure of Allah ﷻ.

Sahaba ﷺ held means of this world in the palms of their hands and a'mals which please Allah ﷻ in their hearts. So when the time came to do so they left means and hastened to do a'mal. On the contrary, if effort on eman is not made, then when push comes to shove, one will leave a'mal and hold fast to means!

Sahaba ﷺ did work of dunya as pretence and kept deen in their hearts. Today how many people follow deen as pretence but keep dunya in their hearts? Pretending to follow deen is hypocrisy and pretending to do things of dunya is a sign of eman.

Muslims spare time & sacrifice wealth and lives to increase their eman. When eman takes a firm root then correct a'mals will come out of the limbs - true Islam will manifest.

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Will Test Eman of the Person, Community & Nation, He Will Exhibit Their Reality

It is not eman to have yaqin on apparent things, rather eman is believing in the unseen and realise it as truth. Eman is to have yaqin on Allah ﷻ with His Names and Attributes, and to have yaqin on the a'mals and facts which are contrary to the observations on apparent things and customs [16]. Eman is not in the basis of logic - eg. Abu Bakr ؓ accepted the miraj of Rasulullah ﷺ without asking, "how".

Allah ﷻ tests people differently. The following four types of tests will continue to come to workers of deen till Qiyamah:

1. Capability. The command of Allah ﷻ contrary to human wealth, power, technology, intelligence etc. This caused downfall of Iblis.
2. Desire. Sahaba ؓ followed Rasulullah ﷺ against their desires, eg. at Hudaybiyah.
3. Zeal. Umar ؓ told a lady with leprosy not to do tawaf [22] - this was against her zeal.
4. Routine. Change of Qibla from Jerusalem to Makkah was a change of routine by the command of Allah.

Today our eman is just of thought. It should display itself by a'mals. When a person has eman he will have the desire and drive from inside to obey Allah. If we claim to have eman, definitely Allah will test our eman. Allah ﷻ will test a person's eman through fitnah.

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ ۞

> And We indeed tried those before them. And Allah will certainly make evident those who are truthful, and He will certainly make evident the liars. [29:3]

The trials of pain and loss are very difficult, but in some ways the trials of prosperity are even more difficult. Abdur Rahman ibn Awf ﷺ, said, "We were tested with hardship alongside Rasulullah ﷺ and we were patient. Then we were tested with prosperity after that and we were not patient." [5]

وَنَبْلُوكُمْ بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً ۖ وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ۞

> And We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good, and to Us you will be returned. [21:35]

وَجَعَلْنَا بَعْضَكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ فِتْنَةً أَتَصْبِرُونَ ۞

> And We have made some of you as a trial for others: will you have patience? [25:20]

Maulana Umar Palanpuri ﷺ said [23]:

> …It's one thing to 'test', it's another thing to inflict 'punishment'. When a Muslim is doing good deeds and some troubles come to him, then this is a test by Allah - because if he fulfils the command of this situation, Allah will reward him. But when a Muslim is doing evil deeds and some troubles come to him, this is a punishment - which is inflicted upon him because of his evil deeds. People often go on considering punishment as test due to their misunderstanding…

We respond to ten questions as we pass various stations in this life and next. **Two in this life:** Are we grateful for the blessings bestowed on us? Are we patient with the trials and tribulations of life? **Three in the grave:** Who is our sustainer? What is our way of life? Whether we recognise the picture of prophet Muhammad ﷺ? **Five on the Day of Judgement:** How did we spend our life? How did we spend our youth? Whence we earned our income and how we spent it? Did we act on the knowledge given to us?

Trials are necessary to exhibit inherent strengths and weaknesses in people. Allah ﷻ said in the Qur'an:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ۞ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ۞ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ۞

> And surely We shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to the steadfast, who, when afflicted with calamity, say: "Truly! To Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return." Such are they on whom are blessings from their Lord, and mercy. Such are the rightly guided. [2:155-7]

When Ibrahim (the son of Rasulullah ﷺ), hardly two years old, was in his last breaths, Rasulullah ﷺ sat holding Ibrahim in his lap. Rasulullah ﷺ kissed him and smelled him, and then his eyes started shedding tears. 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf said, "0 Rasulullah ﷺ, even you are weeping!" He said, "*0 Ibn 'Auf, this is mercy.*"
Then he wept more and said, "*The eyes are shedding tears and the heart is grieved, and we will not say except what pleases our Lord, 0 Ibrahim! Indeed we are grieved by your separation [3].*"

Allah ﷻ bears witness to the tremendous tests that sahaba ﷺ lived through:

إِذْ جَاءُوكُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ وَإِذْ زَاغَتِ الْأَبْصَارُ وَبَلَغَتِ الْقُلُوبُ الْحَنَاجِرَ وَتَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ الظُّنُونَا ۞ هُنَالِكَ ابْتُلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَزُلْزِلُوا زِلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا ۞

> When they came upon you from above you and from below you, and when the eyes grew wild and the hearts reached to the throats, and you were harbouring doubts about Allah. There, the believers were tried and shaken with a mighty shaking. [33:10-1]

This clearly separated the believers from the munafiqs:

وَإِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ۞

> And [remember] when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is disease said, "Allah and His Messenger did not promise us except delusion!" [33:12]

Separation from munafiqs is not a calamity, it is a blessing when facilitated by Allah, [2]:

لَوْ خَرَجُوا فِيكُمْ مَا زَادُوكُمْ إِلَّا خَبَالًا وَلَأَوْضَعُوا خِلَالَكُمْ يَبْغُونَكُمُ الْفِتْنَةَ وَفِيكُمْ سَمَّاعُونَ لَهُمْ ۗ

> Had they marched out with you, they would have added to you nothing except disorder, and they would have been active in your midst sowing sedition among you. And there are some among you who would have listened to them. [9:47]

Narrated from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri ﷺ who said [23]:

> I said: O Rasulullah ﷺ, which people are most severely tested?
> He said: "*The Prophets.*"
> I said: O Rasulullah ﷺ, then who?
> He said: "*Then the righteous, some of whom were tested with poverty until they could not find anything except a cloak to put around themselves. One of them will rejoice at calamity as one of you would rejoice at ease.*"

Muslims are also tested in this world with great acts of oppression committed by others, here we must remember the laws and promises of Allah to respond correctly, ie having patience and persevere in fulfilling His commands. Regarding the trials of Children of Israel Allah ﷻ said:

وَإِذْ أَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ ۖ يُقَتِّلُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ ۚ وَفِي ذَٰلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ۞

> And (recall) when We did deliver you from Pharaoh's folk who were afflicting you with dreadful torment, slaughtering your sons and sparing your women. That was a tremendous trial from your Lord. [7:141]

Hasan al-Basri ﷺ, who had witnessed the oppressive blood-shedding regime of Hajjaj bin Yusuf, said:

> If the people had patience when they are being tested by their unjust ruler, before long Allah will give them a way out. However, they always rush to their swords, so they are left with their swords. By Allah, not even for a single day did they bring about any good [14].

Hudhayfa ibn al-Yaman ﷺ reported [4]:

> I asked, "O Messenger of Allah, no doubt, we had an evil time and Allah brought us a good time through which we are now living. Will there be a bad time after this good time?"
> He (the Holy Prophet) said: *Yes*.
> I said: Will there be a good time after this bad time?
> He said: *Yes*.
> I said: Will there be a bad time after good time?
> He said: *Yes*.
> I said: How?
> Whereupon he said: *There will be leaders who will not be led by my guidance and who will not adopt my ways? There will be among them men who will have the hearts of devils in the bodies of human beings*.
> I said: What should I do. Messenger of Allah, if I (happen) to live in that time?
> He replied: *You will listen to the ameer and carry out his orders; even if your back is flogged and your wealth is snatched, you should listen and obey*.

Sahaba ﷺ would listen to their ameer even if it was against them. Narrated on the authority of Zaid bin Wahab [3]:

> I passed by a place called Ar-Rabadha and by chance I met Abu Dhar and asked him, "What has brought you to this place?"
> He said, "I was in Sham and differed with Muawiya on the meaning of:
>
> O you who believe! Verily, there are many of the [Jewish] rabbis and the [Christian] monks who devour the wealth of mankind in falsehood, and hinder (them) from the way of Allah. And those who hoard up gold and silver (Al-Kanz: money on which zakat has not been paid) and spend them not in the way of Allah, announce unto them a painful torment. [9:34]
>
> Muawiya said, 'This verse is revealed regarding the people of the Book." I said, It was revealed regarding us and also the people of the Book." So we had a quarrel and Mu'awiya sent a complaint against me to 'Uthman.

> ’Uthman wrote to me to come to Medina, and I came to Medina. Many people came to me as if they had not seen me before. So I told this to ’Uthman who said to me, ”You may depart and live nearby if you wish.” That was the reason for my being here for even if an Ethiopian had been nominated as my ruler, I would have obeyed him.

Some people from Kufah met Abu Dhar ﷺ to fight the khalifa. Abu Dhar ﷺ said to them: No; even if Uthman asked me to march from the east to the west, I would obey him [24].

Allah ﷻ Made the Transient Dunya a Place to Discharge Duties & Eternal Akhira for Retribution

This world is temporary and this life is temporary. Similarly, all the conditions in it, whether of pleasure or sorrow, are also temporary. The shortness of the earthly life, which is terminated by death, does not diminish its importance. The biggest reality of death is that at death the person's opportunity to make his akhrira ends. Allah ﷻ reminds us:

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكْكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُشَيَّدَةٍ ۗ

> Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high! [4:78]

This worldly life serves a very important purpose, if we live through this life minding the commands of Allah the way shown by prophet Muhammad ﷺ, then this life is worth living as it becomes our means of pleasing Allah ﷻ and entering a place which has no grievance, where one fulfils their desire and which never ends.

When death meets a person, there is no greater loss than finding oneself empty-handed, leaving everything one worked for. But the worse is still to

come: the pangs of death, the problem of the grave, the problem of the day of judgement, the problem of the bridge over the Jahannam etc. Disbelievers will regret when they enter Jahannam and sink in its agonising fire when all their pleas will be of no avail:

وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ الظَّالِمُ عَلَىٰ يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا ۞

> And the Day when the wrong-doer will bite at his hands, [in regret] he will say: "Oh! Would that I had taken a path with the messenger." [25:27]

Man has been given the choice on how to use the blessings of life, health (intellect, eyes, ears, tongue etc.) wealth & capacity given to him. Death is the ending of a person's choice on those blessings. He will not get a second opportunity to make correct use of these.

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُو رُءُوسِهِمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ رَبَّنَا أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَارْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ ۞

> And if you only could see when the guilty hang their heads before their Lord (saying): "Our Lord! We have now seen and heard, so send us back (to the world), we will do righteous good deeds. Verily! We now believe with certainty." [32:12]

Many people get deceived by this world. Their obsession with material well-being is akin to children's sand-castles as both activities are for temporary pleasures, both neglect the purpose of their existence, both make the doer forget the intention of the higher being. Allah ﷻ reminds us:

فَمَنْ زُحْزِحَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ ۗ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ۞

> And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception. [3:185]

Narrated by Abdullah bin Umar ﷺ that Rasulullah ﷺ took hold of his shoulder and said:

> *Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveller [3].*

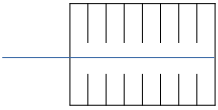
Mujahid ﷺ added: Ibn Umar ﷺ used to say, "If you survive till the evening, do not expect to be alive in the morning, and if you survive till the morning, do not expect to be alive in the evening, and take from your health for your sickness, and (take) from your life for your death."

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *On the Day of Resurrection the feet of the son of Adam will not move away till he is questioned about five matters:*
>
> 1. *on what he spent his life,*
> 2. *in doing what he made his youth pass away;*
> 3. *whence he acquired his wealth,*
> 4. *on what he spent it, and*
> 5. *what he did regarding what he knew* [5].

Once Rasulullah ﷺ drew a square and then drew a line in the middle of it and extended it outside the square and then drew several small lines attached to that central line, and said [3]:

> *This is the human being, and this (the square) is his lease of life (day of death) encircles him from all sides, and this (line) which is outside (the square) is his hope, and these small lines are the calamities and troubles (which may befall him), and if one misses him, another will snap him, and if the other misses him, a third will snap him.*



If men do even the minutest amount of work they will have to leave it in this world when they die. On the contrary even the minutest amount of a'mal done, they will have to take it forward. If we worry about materials and not a'mal then it is a big deception. Whatever comes out of the land will be obliterated, and whatever a'mal that comes out of the body will remain with us forever - whether good or bad [16].

Man is created with weaknesses - he is in need of food, sleep, dwellings, spouse, security etc. Allah ﷻ created the means to fulfil these needs. Now, if these means are utilised in accordance with the commands of Allah without corrupting belief then they will be successful in this world and next.

On the contrary, when someone does not have the correct belief, they will consider success in amassing the means, they will fulfil their needs according to their whims and desires. For this person there will be no end to needs

and wants, they will go through a life of stress and deception, they will become slaves of means. Moreover, waiting for them is an eternal life of regret and punishment.

So we should never leave the deeds of akhira for a little difficulty in this life, for the difficulty will end one day, but its benefit will remain forever. Similarly, we should never disobey the commands Allah ﷻ for a little freedom or comfort in this life, for that will end one day, but the sins and its consequence will remain for eternity (if not forgiven).

Allah ﷻ warned us to not get distracted:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ ۞

> O man! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Most Generous? [86:6]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَا لَكُمْ إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمُ انْفِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ اثَّاقَلْتُمْ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ۚ أَرَضِيتُمْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ ۚ فَمَا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ۞

> O you who believe! What is the matter with you, that when you are asked to go forth in the cause of Allah, you cling heavily to the earth? Are you pleased with the life of this world rather than the hereafter? But little is the comfort of this life, as compared with the hereafter. [9:38]

Allah ﷻ wants rectification within us, not amassing means - in fact, He provides means. When people go beyond their needs and reach for desires, then they are deceived as desires are limitless. Limitless desires cannot be fulfilled in a limited space. The place to fulfil desires is Jannah - that is the place for eternal pleasures. This is stated in the Qur'an - Jannah is filled with things your hearts desire! So make akhira the target. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Whoever is focused only on this world, Allah will confound his affairs and make him fear poverty constantly, and he will not get anything of this world except that which has been decreed for him. Whoever is focused on the hereafter, Allah will settle his affairs for him and make him feel content with his lot, and his provision and worldly gains will undoubtedly come to him* [25].

The important thing is the people, not the created universe. If people are employed properly then the rest of the creations will be utilised properly.

Our effort is fundamental, created universe is not. If we can rectify our a'mals through effort and send good a'mals to sky, then favourable decisions will be made. And if we send corrupt a'mals to sky, then decisions will be made for destruction, oppression, fitnah, hypocrisy and betrayals [16].

Because of widespread neglect of deen we have reached such conditions that Rasulullah ﷺ warned us against. Narrated by 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar ﷺ that Rasulullah ﷺ met them and said [7]:

> *O Muhajirs, you may be afflicted by five things – May Allah forbid that you should live to see them.*
>
> *If fornication should become widespread, you should realise that this has never happened without new diseases befalling the people which their forebears never suffered.*
>
> *If people should begin to cheat in weighing out goods, you should realise that this has never happened without drought and famine befalling the people, and their rulers oppressing them.*
>
> *If people should withhold zakat, you should realise that this has never happened without the rain being stopped from falling – and were it not for the animals' sake, it would never rain again.*
>
> *If people should break their covenant with Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, you should realise that this has never happened without Allah sending an enemy against them to take some of their possessions by force.*
>
> *If the leaders do not govern according to the Book of Allah, you should realise that this has never happened without Allah making them into groups and making them fight one another.*

Rasulullah ﷺ upon whom we brought eman, any decrease in that eman which renders a person non-Muslim, he ﷺ said about this world is that it has no reality, its value in the sight of our creator Allah ﷻ is even less than the wing of a mosquito, not even worth the carcase of a dead baby goat. If anything has any value, then that is the life of akhira, so whatever effort you can make towards that, do that now, otherwise that never-ending life will be full of misery.

4

Trials & Adverse Conditions are Necessary for Our Own Development

For believers, trials are a sign that Allah intends to raise our ranks and expiate our sins. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *If Allah intends good for someone, then he afflicts him with trials [3].*
>
> *If Allah loves a people, then he afflicts them with trials. Whoever is patient has the reward of patience, and whoever is impatient has the fault of impatience [8].*
>
> *The extent of the reward will be in accordance with the extent of the trial. Verily, when Allah loves a people he will test them. Whoever is pleased will be satisfied, and whoever is displeased will have indignation [5].*

Allah ﷻ chose Ibrahim ﷺ as a leader of mankind after putting him through incredible tests:

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ

> And (remember) when the Lord of Ibrahim tried him with (certain) Commands, which he fulfilled. He (Allah) said (to him), "Verily, I am going to make you a leader of mankind." [2:124]

Allah will bring such conditions to see what we prefer, how we perform. Take for example high jump - the player performs many trials. If the player succeeds then he raises the bar. Someone who doesn't know why he is doing it will think the jumper is mad, but by raising the bar the jumper will ensure greater success.

A door may be closed out of wisdom and other doors may be opened out of qudrah of Allah ﷻ. Thus we should have good expectations from Him. Allah ﷻ has limitless doors through which He can provide.

The promise of benefit is not for those who practice according to circumstances. We must practice deen to please Allah, not to remove circumstances. We don't want deen of environment, or deen of circumstance, we want deen of commandments. In every age, in every circumstance that this ummah finds itself reminds it to turn their sight away from creation and turn to Allah, thus solve the problems through salat, du'a and patience. At hard times recite "أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ..."

Disbelievers would keep on saying, "We did this" or "that" etc. But Allah is with us, we must not get affected by the worldly people.

At every time, man is in one of the two stages: good or bad, happy or sad, worried or content etc. So, in whatever state we are in, we should run towards Allah. Unfortunately, we turn our backs to Allah, towards dunya and desires. It should be opposite. If we do tabligh for our desires, accumulate wealth for desire, then this is worshipping of desire. What we need to follow is the command of Allah and forgo desires etc.

In an environment of evil, the heart becomes hard, harder than rock, no good word can penetrate it. When Children of Israel heard that they were accused of being hard-hearted, they killed seventy prophets!

All conditions due to da'wah and tabligh, in jamat outing or at home, are from Allah. We should take them as a means of tarbiya from Allah. The adverse conditions that still exist are actually a mercy from Allah for our tarbiya.

We should look at what the creator of all circumstances, favourable or unfavourable, wants us to do. It's natural to get affected by the circumstances, it's not a defect, eg. Musa عليه السلام run away from Egypt after killing the person, he got scared when his staff turned into a snake.

Allah ﷻ explains this episode in the Qur'an:

قَالَا رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا نَخَافُ أَنْ يَفْرُطَ عَلَيْنَا أَوْ أَنْ يَطْغَىٰ ۞

> They said, "Our Lord, indeed we are afraid that he will hasten [punishment] against us or that he will transgress." [20:45]

وَأَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۚ فَلَمَّا رَآهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّىٰ مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ۚ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَا تَخَفْ إِنِّي لَا يَخَافُ لَدَيَّ الْمُرْسَلُونَ ۞

> And [he was told], "Throw down your staff." But when he saw it writhing as if it were a snake, he turned in flight and did not return. [Allah said], "O Musa, fear not. Indeed, in My presence the messengers do not fear… [27:10]

What brings our downfall is if we don't perform the command of Allah at that very moment. So Musa ﷺ grasped the snake as commanded by Allah, he went back to Pharaoh to give da'wah as commanded by Allah ﷻ.

Following the demise of Rasulullah ﷺ Muslim ummah faced three impending problems:

- Enemy planning new attacks
- Zakat refused by some Muslims
- Despatch of army of Usama bin Zayd ﷺ.

Many sahaba ﷺ gave opinions based on adverse conditions in Medinah but followed the authority of Abu Bakr ﷺ when he decided to send the army of Usama bin Zayd ﷺ.

Abu Bakr ﷺ said, "Whatever the circumstances Usama must go as directed by Rasulullah ﷺ." He said, "I would not be affected by the condition of the time", he was only interested in the commands of Allah. When the number of men of Medina reduced to a few, and some suggested halting any more despatches, he said, "Even if dogs come and take mothers of believers and take them to streets, I will not stop the army of Usama bin Zayd. It cannot be while Abu Bakr is alive and deen is lacking." He kept on despatching until a time came when no man was in Medina for three days.

At the moment, we are living according to situations. When adversity comes we are learning du'as and praying so that it is removed. When it is removed then we forget deen. The rule (in Qur'an) is that one who practices according to situations will not be helped, and the one who practices fulfilling the commandments of Allah ﷻ will be helped in every condition.

There are lots of hidden benefits for the slaves in the trials and difficulty that comes from Allah. However with the condition that the slave, while keeping his thoughts of Him good, tries to earn the pleasure of His sustainer by reviving His deen with their life and spending whatever wealth they had, seeking His help for his needs, and reflect on his weaknesses and inability in his heart.

When difficulty comes to people of evil a'mal then it is for their return to obedience.

وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُمْ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَدْنَىٰ دُونَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَكْبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ۞

> And verily, We will make them taste of the lower torment (in life) prior to the greater torment (after death), in order that they may return. [32:21]

Narrated by 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud ﷺ:

> Rasulullah ﷺ said, "*No person ("no believer" in another rep.) suffers any anxiety or grief, and then says*:
>
> اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ، وَابْنُ عَبْدِكَ، وَابْنُ أَمَتِكَ، نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ، مَاضٍ فِيَّ حُكْمُكَ، عَدْلٌ فِيَّ قَضَاؤُكَ، أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ، سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ، أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ، أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ، أَوْ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ، أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ رَبِيعَ قَلْبِي، وَنُورَ صَدْرِي، وَجَلَاءَ حُزْنِي، وَذَهَابَ هَمِّي
>
> "*O Allah, I am your slave, the son of your slave and the son of your maid-slave. Your command over me is forever executed and Your decree over me is just. I ask you by every Name belonging to You, which You have Named Yourself with, or revealed in Your Book, or You taught to any of Your creation, or You have preserved in the knowledge of the unseen with You, that You make the Qur'an the life of my heart and the light of my chest, and a departure for my sorrow and a release for my anxiety."*
> *except that Allah will remove his sorrow and replace it with happiness.*"
> They asked, "O Rasulullah, should we memorize these phrases (of the du'a)?" He responded, "*Yes, whoever hears these words should memorize them* [26]."

Allah mentions the story of Prophet Ayyub ﷺ who was tested with regard to his wealth, children, and physical health. He had plenty of livestock, cattle and crops, many children and beautiful houses, and he was tested when he lost everything he possessed. Then his health deteriorated so much that he was left alone on the edge of the city, no one to treat him except his wife. Ayyub ﷺ had the utmost patience and trust in Allah; thus he invoked Allah alone for help:

وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ۞ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِ مِنْ ضُرٍّ ۖ وَآتَيْنَاهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُمْ مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِنْ عِنْدِنَا وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَابِدِينَ۞

> And Ayyub [Job], when he called to his Lord, "Indeed, adversity has touched me, and you are the Most Merciful of the merciful." So We responded to him and removed what afflicted him of adversity. And We gave him [back] his family and the like thereof with them as mercy from Us and a reminder for all who worship Us. [21:83-4]

We should not feel overly troubled if we are afflicted with sickness, death, or loss of wealth. When the believers enter the Jannah, they will say:

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزَنَ ۖ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ۞

> And they will say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has removed from us (all) grief. Verily, our Lord is indeed Oft-Forgiving, most ready to appreciate. [35:34]

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri ﷺ said:

> I entered upon Rasulullah ﷺ when he was suffering from a fever, I placed my hand on him and felt heat with my hand from above the blanket.
> I said: O Rasulullah, how hard it is for you!
> He said: *We (Prophets) are like that. The trial is multiplied for us and so is the reward.*
> I said: O Rasulullah, which people are most severely tested?
> He said: *The Prophets.*
> I said: O Rasulullah, then who?
> He said: *Then the righteous, some of whom were tested with poverty until they could not find anything except a cloak to put around themselves. One of them will rejoice at calamity as one of you would rejoice at ease [7].*

Thus afflicted with calamity, we should remain patient and happy with Allah. Rasulullah ﷺ gave many other good news to the patient ones:

> *The servant will continue to be tried until he is left walking upon the earth without any sin [5].*
>
> *Wondrous is the affair of the believer for there is good for him in every matter and this is not the case with anyone except the believer. If he is happy, then he thanks Allah and thus there is good for him. If he is harmed, then he shows patience and thus there is good for him [4].*

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Does not Look at One's Looks or Possessions, But He Looks at the Heart

In this world, we can fool people and impress them with sweet talks and mesmerizing presentations. However, Allah ﷻ knows the conditions of our hearts better than ourselves, not even a stray thought or glance evades His knowledge.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ ۞

Verily, your Lord is Ever Watchful. [89:14]

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Allah does not look at your figures, nor at your attire but He looks at your hearts and accomplishments [4].*
>
> *If anyone loves for Allah's sake, hates for Allah's sake, gives for Allah's sake and withholds for Allah's sake, he will have perfect faith [6].*

A person can fulfil the demand of eman if he has ikhlas. If he has ikhlas he would follow the commands of Allah. Ikhlas of kalima prevents a person from haram. True eman will drive the person to good deeds. On the day of judgement, people will be raised upon what they intended.

The heart directs the actions of man, the limbs simply follow what the heart craves. So we should have sincerity at the heart. In order to rectify our intention da'wah should be given for correct thought, desire and concern. Hence habituate in checking intention in performing any deed, at the beginning, middle and at the end, finish with istighfar.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۞

Indeed he succeeds who purifies his ownself. [91:9]

We should study the signs and characteristic of eman. Among the many qualities of believers, Allah ﷻ mentions the condition of their hearts when Qur'an is recited.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۞

The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (alone). [8:2]

On the contrary, Allah ﷻ likened some hearts as dead:

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۖ فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَٰكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ ۞

Have they not travelled through the land, and have they hearts wherewith to understand and ears wherewith to hear? Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind. [22:46]

Rasulullah ﷺ said that whoever possesses the following three qualities will have the sweetness of eman [3, 4]:

1. The one to whom Allah and His messenger become dearer than anything else;
2. To Love a person and love him only for Allah's sake;
3. To hate to revert to disbelief after Allah saved him from it as he would hate to be thrown into the fire.

We can find more qualities of an enlightened heart in the following conversation Rasulullah ﷺ had with Harith ibn Malik رضي الله عنه:

> Rasulullah ﷺ asked: '*How are you this morning?*'
> He replied: 'I am a true believer this morning'
> Rasulullah ﷺ said: '*Every claim has a reality (proof), so what is the reality (proof) for your claim?*'
>
> He replied: 'Since this morning, I have distanced myself from the world, I spent my night awake in worship and my day fasting. I can almost see the throne of my Rabb being brought for accountability. I can almost see the inhabitants in Jannah visiting one another therein, and I can almost hear the screams of the inhabitants of Jahannam.'
>
> Rasulullah ﷺ said to him: '*[You are] a slave whose heart has been illuminated with eman. Remain steadfast on this perception of yours.*' [27]

Sahaba رضي الله عنهم distanced themselves from that which is profane & temporary. They distanced themselves from that which angers Allah ﷻ and got busy with that which pleases Him. These a'mals are lofty a'amal because they raise the rank of the person in His sight. Allah ﷻ directed even Rasulullah ﷺ to join their company. The value of such a'mals is not affected by the material condition of those involved. Narrated by Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه [6]:

> I was sitting in a group of destitute Muhajirs, and some of them had taken cover behind others as they did not have enough clothes on them, and one of them was reciting the Qur'an to us, when Rasulullah ﷺ entered and stood by us. At this, the one who was reciting the Qur'an became silent.
> Rasulullah ﷺ greeted and then said: *What were you all doing?*
> We said: O Rasulullah, one of our reciters was reciting and we were listening attentively to the Book of Allah Ta'ala.
>
> Rasulullah ﷺ said: *Praise be to Allah Who has created in my Ummah such a people, with whom I have been ordained to sit.*
> Then Rasulullah ﷺ sat amongst us, to be equidistant from everyone. Then he gestured with his hand, and we sat in a circle with all of us facing him. I noticed that Rasulullah ﷺ did not recognize any of them other than me.

Rasulullah ﷺ said: *O community of destitute Muhajirs, glad tidings for you of a perfect light on the Day of Resurrection. You will enter the Paradise half-a-day before the rich people, and that is (the span of) five hundred years.*

Narrated Sahl bin Sa'd As-Sa'id ﷺ [3]:

A man passed by Rasulullah ﷺ and the Prophet ﷺ asked a man sitting beside him, "*What is your opinion about this (passer-by)?*" He replied, "He is from the noble class of people. By Allah, if he should ask for a lady's hand in marriage, he ought to be given her in marriage, and if he intercedes for somebody, his intercession will be accepted."

Rasulullah ﷺ kept quiet, and then another man passed by and he ﷺ asked the same man again, "*What is your opinion about this (second) one?*"
He said, "O Rasulullah ﷺ ! This person is one of the poor Muslims. If he should ask a lady's hand in marriage, no-one will accept him, and if he intercedes for somebody, no one will accept his intercession, and if he talks, no-one will listen to his talk."

Then Rasulullah ﷺ said, "*This (poor man) is better than such a large number of the first type (i.e. rich men) as to fill the earth.*"

The criteria for nobility in the sight of Allah ﷻ is only taqwa. Colour, status, tribe, intelligence, education, wealth, profession, etc. do not have value with regard to this - Allah ﷻ blessed all his slaves with these, some without requiring any effort on their part. However, taqwa is a quality the individual must make effort to develop.

Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ *

O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has at-Taqwa. [49:13]

Rasulullah ﷺ said [6]:

> *Allah, Most High, has removed from you the pride of the pre-Islamic period and its boasting in ancestors. One is only a pious believer or a miserable sinner. You are sons of Adam, and Adam came from dust. Let the people cease to boast about their ancestors. They are merely fuel in Jahannam; or they will certainly be of less account with Allah than the beetle which rolls dung with its nose.*

Allah ﷻ will make a way out for him from every difficulty for those who posses taqwa:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۝ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۚ ۝

> And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him. [65:2-3]

Without taqwa:

- life will be simply exhausting but not achieving anything, or
- one will gain wealth but not the means required (eg. Have money but not medicine, have medicine but no cure), or
- one achieves all of the means but needs still not fulfilled.

With every action, we should be grateful to Allah ﷻ for the tawfiq, we should seek only His pleasure & seek reward only from Him. There should not be any desire to further any worldly motive. Rasulullah ﷺ said [4]:

> *Verily, the first people to be judged on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who was martyred. He will be brought, the blessings of Allah will be made known and he will acknowledge them. Allah will say: What did you do about them? The man will say: I fought in your cause until I was martyred. Allah will say: You have lied, for you fought only that it would be said you were brave, and thus it was said. Then, Allah will order him to be dragged upon his face until he is cast into Hellfire.*

Another man studied religious knowledge, taught others, and recited the Qur'an. He will be brought, the blessings of Allah will be made known and he will acknowledge them. Allah will say: What did you do about them? The man will say: I learned religious knowledge, taught others, and I recited the Qur'an for your sake. Allah will say: You have lied, for you studied only that it would be said you are a scholar and you recited the Qur'an only that it would be said you are a reciter, and thus it was said. Then, Allah will order him to be dragged upon his face until he is cast into Hellfire.

Another man was given an abundance of blessings from Allah and every kind of wealth. He will be brought, the blessings of Allah will be made known and he will acknowledge them. Allah will say: What did you do about them? The man will say: I did not leave any good cause beloved to you but that I spent on it for your sake. Allah will say: You have lied, for you spent only that it would be said you are generous, and thus it was said. Then, Allah will order him to be dragged upon his face until he is cast into Hellfire.

In seeking the pleasure of Allah even a small deed will fetch huge rewards. It's the connection the a'mal has with Allah ﷻ that makes it great, no matter how small it may appear. Conversely, even a great action will be of no value if the intention is not the pleasure of Allah. Rasulullah ﷺ said [3]:

Guard yourself from Jahannam even with half of a date in charity. If he cannot find it, then with a kind word.

Thus, this deen gives everybody a level playing field. It doesn't really matter whether someone is rich or poor. Everyone has a heart - so anyone can work on their heart and become beloved of Allah. No one has an excuse for not being able to reach the nearness of Allah for lack of means (lineage, status, intelligence, stamina etc.) or materials.

16

Power, Fame and Wealth are Intoxicants. Those Who Have it Think Success Cannot be Gained Without it

Power, fame and wealth are intoxicants. Those who have it think success cannot be achieved without it. Throughout the ages this has been the case with all nations, big and powerful except those saved by the Will of Allah (eg. kingdom of Sulaiman ﷺ). They begin to attribute their rise to prosperity and importance to the accumulation of materials, technological know-how and manpower. Allah ﷻ warns the entire humanity from such fallacy and resulting failure in this world and next.

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ بَطِرَتْ مَعِيشَتَهَا ۖ فَتِلْكَ مَسَاكِنُهُمْ لَمْ تُسْكَنْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۖ وَكُنَّا نَحْنُ الْوَارِثِينَ ۞ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يَبْعَثَ فِي أُمِّهَا رَسُولًا يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا ۚ وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِي الْقُرَىٰ إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ ۞

And how many a town have We destroyed, which was thankless for its means of livelihood! And those are their dwellings, which have not been inhabited after them except a little. And verily, We have been the inheritor. And never will your Lord destroy the towns until He sends to their capital a messenger reciting to them Our ayat. And never would We destroy the towns unless the people thereof are oppressors. [28:58-9]

Look how Pharaoh was trying to fool the people.

وَنَادَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ أَلَيْسَ لِي مُلْكُ مِصْرَ وَهَٰذِهِ الْأَنْهَارُ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِي ۖ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ۞ أَمْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْ هَٰذَا الَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ ۞ فَلَوْلَا أُلْقِيَ عَلَيْهِ أَسْوِرَةٌ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ أَوْ جَاءَ مَعَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ مُقْتَرِنِينَ ۞

> And Pharaoh proclaimed among his people, saying: "O my people! Is not mine the dominion of Egypt, and these rivers flowing underneath me. Then do you not see? Am I not better than this one [Musa], who is Mahin [lowly and despicable] and hardly makes himself clear? Why then are not golden bracelets bestowed on him, or angels sent along with him? [43:51-3]

Nowadays people have yaqin in the military even though Allah destroyed Abraha's army with tiny birds thereby proving their yaqin false. All things from a blade of grass to nuclear bombs to rockets to government power etc. are all temporary. These are in control of Allah's qudrah which is unalterable and permanent. Bombs of today will only do what Allah wants.

Often people think they would be successful due to them being in majority. But Nooh's minority succeeded. Allah ﷻ gave victory to the small army of Saul (Talut) against mighty Goliath and his army.

فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ ۚ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُو اللَّهِ كَمْ مِنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ ۞

> So when he [Saul] had crossed it (the river), he and those who believed with him said: "We have no power this day against Goliath and his hosts." But those who knew with certainty that they were to meet their Lord, said: "How often a small group overcame a mighty host by Allah's Leave?" [2:249]

People think farming, gardens and plantations make life, yet Allah ﷻ destroyed the nation of Saba despite their gardens and plantations. As for Ismail ؑ, Allah ﷻ sustained him in barren land that didn't have any sign of gardens or plantations.

Allah gives success with materials and failure with it. In the end, nothing happens from materials, it is by the permission and qudrah of Allah that everything happens.

Much like many showbiz and super-rich of today, Karun amassed huge wealth that would inspire awe and respect from people. But this made them ungrateful and arrogant to the extent they belied the truth. Allah says in the Qur'an:

فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ ۖ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ۞

> So he went forth before his people in his pomp. Those who were desirous of the life of the world, said: "Ah, would that we had the like of what Qarun (Korah) has been given? Verily! He is the owner of a great fortune." [28:79]

وَقَارُونَ وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ ۖ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانُوا سَابِقِينَ ۞

> And (We destroyed) Qarun, Pharaoh, and Haman. And indeed Musa came to them with clear signs, but they were arrogant in the land, yet they could not outstrip Us. [29:39]

So overpowering are these materialistic sentiments on the human psyche that even among those who tout for Islam come to think we cannot bring honour to the ummah without acquiring power and wealth!

The so-called great powers are weaker than the spider's web in front of Allah ﷻ. With the effort of Rasulullah ﷺ, when a group of pious people emerged, then Allah cleared all the webs of Roman and Persian empires. These empires tried to use their might and wealth to impede the march of Islam but failed at a time when the ummah had the least amount of power and wealth. This ummah led the world and prospered because of the firm yaqin, sincerity and sacrifices of sahaba ﷺ.

Rasulullah ﷺ said [4]:

> *Verily Allah ﷻ does not diminish the welfare of the believers. He will be paid in this world and rewarded in the hereafter. On the other hand, the disbelievers will be given livelihood and welfare in accordance with what they work for in this world. When it comes to the hereafter there will be no more good to be rewarded for them.*

Temporary material gains should never be magnified in ones heart. Allah ﷻ cautions and reassures us in the Qur'an:

وَلَوْلَا أَنْ يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَجَعَلْنَا لِمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَٰنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُقُفًا مِنْ فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ * وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَابًا وَسُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَّكِئُونَ * وَزُخْرُفًا ۚ

And were it not that mankind would have become one community (all desiring worldly life only), We would have provided for those who disbelieve in the Most Gracious, silver roofs for their houses, and elevators whereby they ascend, and for their houses, doors and couches of silver upon which to recline, and adornments of gold. [43:33-5]

لَا يَغُرَّنَّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ * مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ *

Let not the free movement of the disbelievers throughout the land deceive you. A brief enjoyment; then, their ultimate abode is hell; and worst indeed is that place for rest.

[3:196-7]

وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ *

And strain not your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to various groups of them, the splendour of worldly life by which We test them. But the provision (in akhira) of your Lord is better and more lasting. [20:131]

Narrated by Abdullah ibn Mas'ud ﷺ:

> If the people of knowledge were to preserve it and impart it to those worthy of it they will most certainly be the leaders of their age by virtue of it. But they passed it on to the people of the world to attain some portion of their world, so they fell in their estimation. I heard your Apostle ﷺ saying:
>
> *Whoever centres all his thoughts upon one object, viz. the thought of the akhira, Allah will provide him with the worldly needs, and he whose whole distraction is worldly ends, Allah does not care in what wilderness of the world he perishes [5, 7].*

Mu'adh ibn Jabal ﷺ reported Rasulullah ﷺ sent him to Yemen and he said,

> *Beware of luxury. Verily, the servants of Allah do not live luxuriously [8].*

It is not wealth that we are looking for and it is not poverty either. The purpose of life is to seek Allah's pleasure. How can we determine if the good fortunes we receive please Allah? One can recognize the real blessings when he shows gratitude to Allah upon the gifts. If he uses them for righteousness and it makes him more sincere in his commitment to Allah, then all the gifts he received is a real blessing from Allah that He's pleased with. When the purpose of life is to seek Allah's pleasure, undoubtedly we will be safe in this dunya and akhira.

17

Straight Path is of Eman & A'mal. Stray Path is of Means & Materials

Everyone wants success, no-one wants to be a failure. Man seeks two paths to success:

By Reason and Science - This path is stray - one who follows this, Allah become displeased with him. This is the path of materials: Gold & Silver, Farming & Trading, skills & degrees and so on. One who keeps these in front of him keeps the world in front of him. This path is laid with stress. They have corrupt beliefs, ungrateful attitudes - yet Allah still shows benevolence, He doesn't punish them straight away. He gives them respite. Allah ﷻ makes arrangement for their hidaya, He sends prophets, He offers means and circumstances which make them reflect and turn back.

The field of reason and science is severely limited as they are unable to inform us anything from ghayb such as souls, angels, jinns, graves, paradise & hell from the hidden treasures and systems of Allah. True success is not in following reason and science - a success is not a true success if it's not permanent. Pharaoh, Nimdrud and Karun were failed by their reliance on reason and science. Nowadays in most educational institutions, youths are taught such things until their hearts become hard, until their hearts turn away from the Creator.

When people only rely on their observations, senses, intellect and knowledge, they get deceived by means. They think success is in acquiring means - thus their yaqin gets corrupted, they exert all their efforts on those means, which is cruel to themselves and others, even if they get plenty of these means. Eventually, they lead to their failure.

Abilities given by Allah ﷻ are sadly being used solely to improve materials! But this effort does not improve the people. They invent new things, refine existing means & materials, but sadly as the quality of these things improve they degrade themselves lower!

These people have a phobia of deeni people. Nimrud tried to set an example out of Ibrahim ﷺ. But Allah ﷻ had a plan too, He made an example of Nimrud. Karun thought he didn't need to pay zakat as the wealth was due to his policy, idea, hard work etc. Allah ﷻ proved He doesn't need water to sink, He can sink in the earth.

Allah ﷻ has shown the end of many nations that believed in apparent power in the majority, agriculture, technology, kingdom etc.

By Virtue of Deen - This is the path of eman & a'mal. One who threads this path masters the biggest achievement, that is to be accepted by Allah and to please Him. So let yaqin be correct and a'mal be good.

The prophets show the path to the creator of everything. Allah ﷻ kept success in the knowledge that He bestowed on man through prophets. True success is in the pleasure of Allah before death, in obedience to Him in the manner shown by Muhammad ﷺ.

Deen is a means to get close to Allah ﷻ. Only obedience to Allah ﷻ will lead to success. Without Allah, if someone accumulates everything he wishes still it is nothing. On the contrary, if he has nothing but Allah then he has everything.

Difference between man and animal is deen. Deen is a collection of a'mals. With deen, dunya will become correct. The one without deen will ruin his dunya. Even everyday mundane acts, if done according to sunnah, will be counted as a'mal of deen. Dunya becoming deen is like mud becoming gold. Life of every a'mal is eman and ihtisab.

Many people say that they have no time because of earning rizk. But Allah ﷻ has taken the responsibility of rizk, which is apparently the main problem for men. In reality, what they need the most is hidaya.

> Imagine telling someone that putting one seed of date, thousands of fruits will come out. People would believe it because they have seen it. Similarly, one who acts by the deen will see the benefit of deen. One who doesn't will be left behind.

The straight path is straight and clear like the motorway or freeway, no one with guidance and sincerity will ever fail to reach the destination. But there are many crooked paths which comes off it, only the wretched, one with a crooked heart will follow it. The straight path is the path of all the prophets and sahaba ﷺ , khulafa ar-raashidun and all those who followed them thereafter.

Ibn Mas'ud ﷺ reported [28]:

> Rasulullah ﷺ drew a line in the sand with his hand and he said, "*This is the straight path of Allah.*" Then, the Prophet drew lines to the right and left, and he said, "*These are other paths, and there is no path among them but that a devil is upon it calling to its way.*" Then the Prophet recited the verse:
>
> Verily, this is the straight path, so follow it and do not follow other ways. [6:153]

When eman comes, all parts of the body will display eman by its action. When the command forbidding alcohol came, sahaba ﷺ did not say we drank before we heard the command, rather they vomited. When we have eman, we will have taqwa. A person with taqwa, he cannot eat haram.

When Allah سبحانه وتعالى Wants to Punish a Person or Nation, He Leaves Them on the Path of Oppression

When Allah gives limited respite (*istidraj*) to people, we should not be deceived by it. Respite deceives only the ignoramus. So the man keeps on harbouring corrupt beliefs in the heart; enjoining and accumulating wealth unlawfully and persists in other shameful deeds. His condition is similar to a fish caught in the hook. The fisherman lets more thread, this relief is only temporary, soon the fisherman will pull the line and the fish with it. This fish will then be cooked on a frying pan and eaten by people with 32 teeth, and its bone will be given to the cats!

The men of istidraj despite indulging in sins think that Allah ﷻ loves them. They look down on those who take religion seriously, such as boasting arrogantly, "Look! he goes to the mosque every day and night, but he can't afford to buy even a…. If he adopted my attitude he would be able to become rich like me." In reality, sometimes Allah ﷻ gives a lot of fortune to someone in order to destroy that person.

Another similitude of these people is termites which "stay quiet under the rocks or crawl beneath the dead leaves while they do not have the wings,

but when Allah wants to end their lives He gives them wings. Then they would turn into winged termites (alate). When they have acquired the blessings (wings), the winged termites would fly and try to resist the fire. Likewise, when a human being acquires good fortunes, he would try to resist Allah ﷻ."

These people are deceived by the dunya as Allah ﷻ warned us about it:

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ ۖ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَاهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا ۖ وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ ۚ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ۞

> Know that the life of this world is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children, as the likeness of vegetation after rain, thereof the growth is pleasing to the tiller; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw. But in the hereafter there is a severe torment, and (also) forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure, whereas the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment. [57:20]

Rasulullah ﷺ said :

> *When you see Allah ﷻ gives good fortunes to his slaves who are always committing sins, know that the person is being given istidraj by Allah ﷻ [12, 8, 13].*

Pharaoh is another proof of istidraj. His riches was beyond measure, he was never sick, not even a sneeze because Allah gave him the blessings of good health. Other people got sick many times, but not Pharaoh, other people died, but he still never showed any sign that he was going to die until the feeling of arrogance and pride came into him and straight away claimed himself, God. But it was with those "blessings" that Allah destroyed him.

The magicians of Pharaoh realised the power behind Musa عليه السلام was the qudrah of Allah. It was not a conflict between Pharaoh and Children of Israel, it was between Allah and Pharaoh and his people. Allah said in the Qur'an that He removed Pharaoh and his people from all wealth, power etc. and then destroyed them and gave power and wealth to Children of Israel.

Allah ﷻ explains their affair:

ذَرْهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَتَمَتَّعُوا وَيُلْهِهِمُ الْأَمَلُ ۖ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ۞ وَمَا أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا وَلَهَا كِتَابٌ مَعْلُومٌ ۞

Leave them to eat and enjoy, and let them be preoccupied with (false) hope. They will come to know! And never did We destroy a township but there was a known decree for it. [15:3-4]

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَكُمْ وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِدْرَارًا وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَنْهَارَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۞

Have they not seen how many a generation before them We have destroyed whom We had established on the earth such as We have not established you? And We poured out on them rain from the sky in abundance, and made the rivers flow under them. Yet, We destroyed them for their sins… [6:6]

Pharaoh feared a child, born amongst the Children of Israel, who will destroy his kingdom and thus commanded that all boys borne in them should be killed:

إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضْعِفُ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ ۚ

Verily, Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people factions, oppressing a group, killing their sons, and letting their females live. [28:4]

Children of Israel came to Musa ﷺ for advice & help. Musa ﷺ told them that Allah ﷻ will take the oppressor to task. The oppressor is given all the means of oppression. Bani Israel said, “Our babies are killed before and now it is going to happen again, why has the oppressor not been destroyed?” They were told the delay is from you, not from Allah ﷻ. You must establish salat for the help to come. So all the Children of Israel begun to establish salat.

Allah ﷻ commanded them to leave for Baitul Maqdis. They left in the dead of the night. Pharaoh followed to kill them. During the crossing, they were told by Allah ﷻ to come out quickly so that the following army of Pharaoh could be destroyed. Similarly, we must come out quickly from job, shop, home etc. to deserve the help of our Lord.

Muslims need not worry about those who deny Allah, deny His message and break His rules, provided that they enjoin good and forbid evil. Allah ﷻ informed Rasulullah ﷺ how to respond to their attitude:

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ آذَنْتُكُمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَاءٍ ۖ وَإِنْ أَدْرِي أَقَرِيبٌ أَمْ بَعِيدٌ مَا تُوعَدُونَ ۞ إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْتُمُونَ وَإِنْ أَدْرِي لَعَلَّهُ فِتْنَةٌ لَكُمْ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ۞

> But if they turn away, then say, "I have warned you all alike, although I know not whether that which you are promised is near or far. Indeed, He knows that which is said openly, and that which you conceal. And I know not; perhaps it is a trial for you and enjoyment for a time." [21:109-11]

Abu Bakr ﷺ said: 0 people! you are given to reading this verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ ۖ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ

> O you who believe! Take care of your ownselves. Those who have gone astray cannot harm you if ye are rightly guided. [5:105]

but I have heard Rasulullah ﷺ saying that when people see something evil and do not seek to liquidate it, they will soon find themselves encompassed by the wrath of Allah.

Similar was the explanation by Imam Nawawi ﷺ [29]:

> The consensus of opinion of the learned personages regarding the meaning of his verse is that, "when you have performed the duty enjoined on you, the headlessness of those who refuse to profit by your counsel will not harm you," as says Allah Ta'ala:
>
> وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ
>
> And no bearer of burdens shall bear another's burden. [35:18]
>
> and of the several injunctions addressed to all, one is that regarding enforcement of good and prevention of evil. Therefore when an individual has performed this duty and the addressee proves refractory, the former shall not be penalised for it. He has performed his duty of "amr-o-nahi" and acceptance or rejection of it by the other party is not within his competence. Allah knows best.

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Kept Complete Success (of Dunya and Akhira) of the Whole Humanity in Complete Deen

The person who makes a machine knows how to operate it and knows what makes it function good or bad. If gasoline is used to fill a diesel car it will only ruin the car! This is why machines are usually despatched with instruction manuals from the manufacturers. For more complex machines it comes even with a trainer.

Allah ﷻ created human with His qudrah. He created them in the mother's womb, where nobody else's hand can reach, only He knows how this human-machine can be developed properly, how it can be used for progress, for benefit or destruction. Allah ﷻ sent prophets to explain this reality and the last of them is Muhammad ﷺ. Now whoever will apply himself according to his way will be successful. And whoever will contradict his way will be unsuccessful. And the degree of his failure will fully manifest in akhira.

Life is made with deen. Life is wrecked with other than deen. Asbabs are for getting through life - not to make life. People are looking for success in asbabs but it is only Allah ﷻ who gives success and He did not keep it there! Allah did not keep our success in the things scattered in this world - rather our success is in eman and a'mal which are from our own internal qualities.

One will find success within themselves if their a'mals becomes correct, even if they live in a hut. In contrast, if they disregard the deen of Allah and looks for success in asbabs, they will be disappointed even if they possess all the asbabs for it. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ۞

> And whosoever obeys Allah and His messenger he has indeed achieved a great achievement. [33:71]

The one who looks for success in other than deen, his example is like the person who looks for the lost key under the lamppost in the market. When asked where he lost it, he says it was at his home. So when he is further asked to search at home he explains there is no light at home but the market has light. Instead, he should take light to home to look for the key!

Every person leaving home is coming out to solve his problems. They are acquiring wrong solutions, so their problems are increasing and not getting solved. The solution is in turning to Creator and stop turning towards creations.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ الظَّمْآنُ مَاءً حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا وَوَجَدَ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ فَوَفَّاهُ حِسَابَهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ۞

> As for those who disbelieve, their deeds are as a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one thinks it to be water, until he comes up to it, he finds it to be nothing, but he finds Allah with him, Who will pay him his due. And Allah is swift in taking account. [24:39]

Therefore having means with us is not necessarily important, rather having Allah ﷻ with us is important. Leaving means is not deen, the same way utilising means is not deen.

Leaving or utilising the means becomes deen when it is done according to commands of Allah ﷻ. So one sits at his business not because it gives rizk, but rather sitting in the business so that the giver of rizk becomes happy with him. Because of this understanding, he will conduct his business in a way that makes Allah ﷻ happy, he will follow the way of Rasulullah ﷺ in his business, he will not do haram in the business, he will only busy himself in the occupation for as long as he is permitted. Such a person will approach means and leave means easily when deen demands it.

The one who fulfils the commands of Allah ﷻ may face difficulty initially but becomes successful. This person apparently will be in difficulty but internally he will be at peace - he finds this difficulty sweet because he keeps the promises of Allah ﷻ in front. In the tragedy of Bir Ma'oona when the polytheists treacherously attacked Haraam ﷺ with a sphere as he delivered the letter of Rasulullah ﷺ to Bani Aamir clan of Najd, Haraam ﷺ proclaimed, "By the Rabb of the Ka'ba, I have triumphed [30]," and passed away. Such difficulty which is experienced by a believer is like a knife that hurts a person in the hand of a surgeon.

The value of deen is far more than all the treasures of the universe. One single tasbih or tahlil is more valuable than all the treasures of the universe. One single sunnah is more valuable than all the treasures of the universe. All the worldly powers are insignificant compared to the deen because the power of Almighty Allah ﷻ is with deen.

So what is deen? Deen is following the commands of Allah the way shown by Rasulullah ﷺ and it pervades every facet of life. Shari'a, which is vaguely translated as Islamic law, guides them to correct deeds. Every story related in the Qur'an is there to provide a principle of human behaviour, individually and collectively, resulting in success here or in akhira. Whatever Rasulullah ﷺ has brought, we must take it and whatever he has forbidden us from we must refrain from it.

Complete success is only possible with the practice of complete deen.

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ۚ

> This day, I have perfected for you your religion, completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as religion. [5:3]

A brand new car which is missing say a wheel cannot deliver the benefit of a complete car, even if it has all the other parts. Similarly, when deen is practised as it suits one's whims and desires, this deen is handicapped and consequently will not deliver complete success. Allah ﷻ warned us against following deen partially:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ۞

> O you who believe! Enter perfectly in Islam and follow not the footsteps of Shaitan. Verily! He is to you a plain enemy. [2:208]

Once somebody went to get a tattoo of a tiger on his body. When the work began with the needle, it felt quite painful. So the man asked, "What are you making?" He replied, "First of all drawing the tail of the tiger." The man said, "Leave the tail, you can still draw a tiger without the tail." So he left the tail and started drawing from the other side. So he asked, "What are you making now?" The tattooist replied, "The ear." He said, "You can make the tattoo without the ear of the tiger, leave the ear, you draw the tiger without the ear." So tattooist said, "What kind of tiger is that without tail or ear?" Similarly, if Islam is made out according to our wishes and fancies then what would remain of Islam? That would be a man-made thing.

Reciting kalima, praying five times salat, fasting in Ramadan, doing hajj, giving zakat is not complete deen - that's the foundation! The effort for complete success is not limited to working on just own-selves and family, rather it demands making effort on others and persevere when things get difficult. Along with salat, hajj and zakat, we must enjoin good and forbid evil. If we fail to do so then even our dua might be rejected. Narrated by A'isha ﷺ:

> Once Rasulullah ﷺ entered the house and I guessed from his face that something of great importance had happened to him. He did not talk to anyone, and after making wudhu he entered the mosque. I stood behind the wall to hear what he said. He sat at the pulpit and after praising Allah, he said,
>
> *0 Muslims! Allah has commanded you to call people to good deeds, and prevent them from committing sins; otherwise a time will come when you will pray to Him, but He will not listen to you; you will ask your needs of Him, but He will not grant them; you will demand His help against your enemies, but He will not help you.*
>
> After this he came down from the pulpit [7, 11].

It was narrated that Abu Madeenah al-Darimi said: When two men among the companions of Rasulullah ﷺ met, they did not part until one of them recited to the other: "By time. Verily, man is in loss…", then one would say salam to the other [31]. The indication here is that the success is not complete without exhorting each other to uprightedness, beyond own-selves and family, and when one does that patience becomes necessary due to inevitable obstacles.

True Understanding of Deen Flows From the Sahaba ﷺ Meaning of Qur'an & Hadith is Elusive Without Them

The true understanding of the deen was imbibed in the lives of the sahaba ﷺ. They lived and died to gain the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and they earned that. No other generation of people on the face of the earth can claim that till the Day of Judgement:

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ

> And the first forerunners to embrace Islam of the Muhajirs and the Ansars and also those who followed them exactly - Allah is pleased with them as they are pleased with Him. [9:100]

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *The best of mankind is my generation, then those that come after them, then those that come after them [3, 4].*

> *My sahaba are the custodians for my ummah, so when my sahaba go, that which has been promised to my ummah will come to it [4, 8].*

This is why their similitude is as the stars in the sky. Just as those who follow the stars they reach their destination, similarly if we follow the understanding of the sahaba ﷺ with respect to Qur'an & Sunnah, we will reach the same destination, i.e. pleasure of Allah ﷻ.

As Maulana Umar Palanpuri ﷺ explains the superior status of the best generations is so not because of time, place or anything material - they were so because of the strength of their belief, mission and deeds of utmost purity.

It is incumbent upon believers to follow the way of the salaf as they were the ardent followers of Rasulullah ﷺ. Threading their path is the only way of salvation of the latter generation. Knowing the ways of the salaf: their struggle to live by and propagate deen, their attitude in times of trial and tribulation, through authentic stories and narrations become an important part and parcel of knowing the deen of Allah. Through their examples, we shall find the true meanings of obeying Allah and His messenger ﷺ.

Imam Malik ﷺ said:

> …So that which was not part of the deen at that time, cannot be part of the deen today. The latter part of the ummah will not be rectified except by that which rectified its earliest part [32].

The way of the sahaba ﷺ is the only correct and acceptable implementation of deen as Allah ﷻ declares in the Qur'an:

وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ۞

> And whoever contradicts and opposes the messenger after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the believers' way, We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in hell – what an evil destination! [4:115]

فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا ۖ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ ۖ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۞

> So if they believe as you believe, then they are rightly guided, but if they turn away, then they are only in opposition. So Allah will suffice you against them. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. [2:137]

In light of this ayat, the correct understanding is what mirrors the beliefs and understandings of the sahaba ﷺ. They were the most fortunate people as they learnt the deen directly from Rasulullah ﷺ. Consequently, their understanding was the purest, they were the most successful.

When people do not follow sahaba ﷺ then they will wrongly interpret Qur'an and conduct themselves contrary to the commands of Allah while thinking they are following Qur'an. The following three instances serve as good examples of this.

(1) Narrated by Alqama ﷺ [3]:

> 'Abdullah (ibn Masud) said, "Allah curses those ladies who practice tattooing and those who get themselves tattooed, and those ladies who remove the hair from their faces and those who make artificial spaces between their teeth in order to look more beautiful whereby they change Allah's creation."
>
> His saying reached a lady from Bani Asad called Umm Yaqub who came and said, "I have come to know that you have cursed such-and-such?"
> He replied, "Why should I not curse these whom Rasulullah ﷺ has cursed and who are cursed in the Book of Allah!"
> Um Yaqub said, "I have read the whole Qur'an, but I did not find in it what you say."
> He said, "Verily, if you have read it (Qur'an), you have found it. Didn't you read:
>
> وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ۚ
>
> And whatever the Messenger has given you – take; and what he has forbidden you – refrain from. [59:7]
>
> She replied, "Yes, I did,"
> He said, "Verily, Rasulullah ﷺ forbade such things."
> She said, "But I see your wife doing these things?"
> He said, "Go and watch her."
> She went and watched her but could not see anything in support of her statement. On that he said, "If my wife was as you thought, I would not keep her in my company."

(2) One youngster was eating pork using the following verse as evidence:

الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتُ ۖ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَهُمْ ۖ

> This day [all] good foods have been made lawful, and the food of those who were given the Scripture is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. [5:5]

When the verse that explicitly makes pigs haram was mentioned, he pointed to the fact that pigs of today are cleaner than before!

(3) In one place people announced to fast only in winter and not in summer when it's hot using the following verse as evidence:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ

> Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. [2:185]

So we will never understand the Qur'an without following the understanding of the sahaba ﷺ. Imam al-Awzae ﷺ said [24]:

> Hold fast to the narrations of the salaf, even if people were to abandon you. Beware of the opinions of the people, no matter how much they beautify it with their speech.

Sufiyan at-Thawri ﷺ said [33]:

> You are in a time which the sahaba ﷺ used to seek refuge from reaching, and they had the 'ilm that we do not have, and they had precedence which we do not. So how is it for us, when we reach that, having little 'ilm, little patience, few helpers upon what is good, corruption of the people and pollution of this world? So take to the original state of affairs and cling to it.

Sufiyan at-Thawri ﷺ repeated thrice:

> This deen is based upon narrations, not opinion [24].

This stance is so beautified in the following famous verses of a poem by Abu Zayd al-Faqeeh:

> Every speech after the Qur'an is heresy, Except for the hadith and except for understanding (fiqh) in deen.
> And 'ilm emanates from "It was narrated to us." (*haddathanaa*),
> And everything beside this is a whispering from the devils [18].

Rasulullah ﷺ has given clear guidance on how to identify people who are upon truth:

> *Fear Allah regarding my sahaba. Do not treat them with bias after me. He who loves them does so from love of me, and he who hates them does so from hatred of me. He who abuses them has injured me, he who abuses me has abused Allah, and he who abuses Allah will soon be punished by Him [5].*

How beautiful were the words of 'Abdullah ibn Masud ﷺ:

> Whoever among you wishes to follow (someone), let him follow one who has died, for the one who is still alive is not safe from fitnah. The companions of Muhammad ﷺ were the best of this ummah, the most righteous of heart and the deepest in knowledge and the most straightforward, people whom Allah chose to accompany His Prophet and establish His religion. So acknowledge their virtue and follow in their footsteps, and adhere as much as you can to their morals and religion, for they were following right guidance [34].

Al-Khateeb al-Baghdadi ﷺ said in al-Kifayah:

> Even if there was nothing narrated from Allah or His messenger about them, the things that they did such as migrating, engaging in jihad, supporting (Rasulullah ﷺ and Islam), expending their lives and their wealth, killing their fathers and sons (in jihad), sincerely following the deen, believing strongly and with certainty, is definitive proof of their good character and sincerity, and shows that they are superior to all those sincere people of good character who come after them, for all time. This is the view of all the scholars, and of the fuqaha' whose opinion counts.

To summarise upon us is the duty of imitation as Allah ﷻ said:

آمِنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ ۞

> Believe as the people (followers of Muhammad ﷺ, Ansars and Muhajirs [35]) have believed. [2:13]

Sahaba ﷺ Vowed to Follow Rasulullah ﷺ in Ease & in Difficulty, Whether They Liked it or not

In the Second Pledge of 'Aqaba sahaba ﷺ made the following pledges [36]:

- To listen and obey Rasulullah ﷺ in times of plenty as well as scarcity; whether to our liking or not.
- Not prefer ourselves to the other Muslims,
- Not oppose those who are in authority,
- To speak the truth wherever we are, and not fear the blame of the blamers in the cause of Allah.

In another narration the pledges also included enjoining good and forbidding evil, and to defend Rasulullah ﷺ if he goes to them the same way as they defend themselves, their wives and children [37].

True to their words sahaba ﷺ gave all they had for the service of deen. This is why studying their life is so inspirational. Without the stories of prophets and sahaba, we cannot bring the deen that was intended by Allah ﷻ. Instead, it will be a deen constructed from human thoughts however guided it may be.

Roughly six months before the demise of Rasulullah ﷺ the Ansars held a mashwara in which they planned to propose to Rasulullah ﷺ to take leave for six months each year from the effort of deen outside their locality. As a result of their relentless effort for deen, their farms and businesses suffered and their houses were empty of materials; and on the other hand, they had fulfilled the promises they made to Rasulullah ﷺ, and the deen was in a much stronger position, it had numerous supporters and deen started spreading.

Even before they could reach the house of Rasulullah ﷺ the following ayat was revealed warning against this plan [2]:

وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ ۛ

> And spend in the Path of Allah, and do not contribute to your own destruction. [2:195]

It is impossible to give justice in words to the sheer commitment and resolve sahaba ﷺ had for the sake of deen in spite of all the tests and trials. Allah ﷻ bore testimony to their purity of heart and sincere faith in Qur'an:

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَنْتَظِرُ ۖ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا ۞

> Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah. Among them is he who has fulfilled his vow, and among them is he who awaits. And they have not altered in the least. [33:23]

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ۞

> Certainly Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance to you (O Muhammad) under the tree, He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down tranquillity upon them, and He rewarded them with a near victory. [48:18]

We can get a glimpse of how much each and every sahaba ﷺ loved Rasulullah ﷺ and the hardship they were prepared to undergo for the sake of deen from the story of Khubaib ﷺ.

When Khubaib ﷺ was captured and he was sold in Makkah, the sons of Al-Harith bin 'Amr bought him as he killed their father at the battle of Badr.

They kept him in a cage. Bint al-Harith used to say, “By Allah, I never saw a prisoner better than Khubaib. Once I saw him eating from a bunch of grapes although at that time no fruits were available at Makkah, and he was confined with iron chains in a cage, and in fact, it was nothing but food bestowed upon him by Allah.”

Finally, they took Khubaib ﷺ out of the sanctuary of Makkah to hang him. They gave him his last wish. Khubaib ﷺ requested to pray two rakat of salat. He performed the salat the most calmly and said, “Had I not been afraid that you would think I was afraid of death, I would have prayed for a longer time.”

Khubaib ﷺ made a supplication, “O Allah! There is no one here who will convey my salams to Rasulullah ﷺ so You convey my message”. Jibreel عليه السلام conveyed his salams to Rasulullah ﷺ who replied, “And may my salams be upon you, O Khubaib!”. And he told the gathering that the Quraysh had martyred Khubaib ﷺ.

The mushriks most insolently asked Khubaib ﷺ when his body was full of spear wounds: ”Do you wish that Rasulullah ﷺ was in your place today?” Khubaib ﷺ answered, ”I swear by Allah! I cannot even bear that I am let free in exchange for a thorn to prick a foot of Rasulullah ﷺ, may my soul be sacrificed for him.” [38]

When Khubaib ﷺ was hanged on the rope and he still had life, he said, ”O Allah! count them one by one, (kill them) and do not leave anyone.” and added, “When I am being martyred as a Muslim, I do not care in what way I receive my death for the sake of Allah, because this death is in Allah’s Cause. If He wishes, He will bless the cut limbs [3].” When Khubaib ﷺ was cursing them, the unbelievers knew that it would be accepted. A year had not passed and they were all destroyed. Only one of them survived who lay on the floor at the time of the curse.

Sahaba ﷺ endured the most difficult trials and that did not make them lose courage and so Allah’s help was theirs. Take any ordinary sahabi and you will find many amazing stories of eman, self-sacrifice & courage with little or no resources [39].

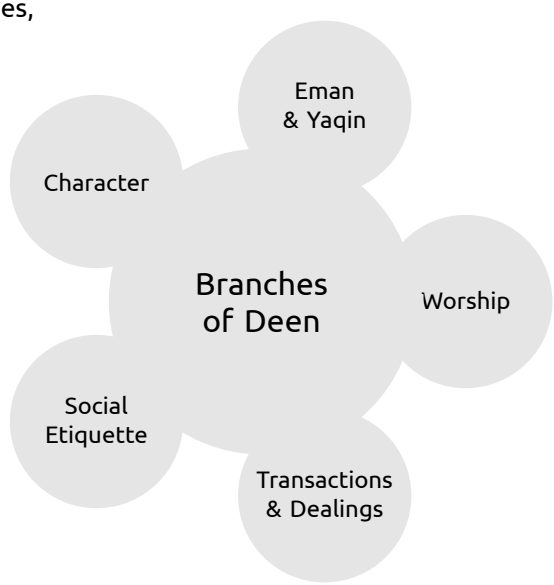
The Dunya of Those Who Have Deen Will be Clean & Pure

Allah ﷻ promises a pure life of the noblest character in deen through Qur'an, a holy life that is pleasing to the creator of the heavens and earth. The Qur'an guides and transforms the person and society alike:

إِنَّ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ ۞

Verily, this Qur'an guides to that which is most just and right. [17:9]

Anything that a Muslim does, whether by heart, tongue or limbs fall under one of the five distinct branches of deen as depicted below:



Those who have deen, their dunya will be clean and pure. Dunya here means those things one has to get involved in this world by necessity, including their intention, social interaction with others and manner of earning and spending wealth. By extension, if the whole society establishes deen then it will benefit everybody, equity, justice and peace will prevail - vanity, corruption and shamelessness will depart.

This is not just a theory but societies based on deen manifested in many empires such as Umayyads (including al-Andalus), Abbasids, Seljuks, Ottomans, Mamluks, Moghuls, Khwarezmian, Safavids, Fatimid, Fulbe and many more, spanning across races, continents & centuries.

Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ۞

> Verily, Allah enjoins justice and goodness [40], and giving to kith and kin [41]and forbids immorality [42], and evils, and wickedness, He admonishes you, that you may take heed. [16:90]

So when someone has pure deen, it means not only a heart free of corrupt beliefs & certainty, and worship free of bid'ah and shirk but someone whose character, social and commercial life will be guided by Qur'an and Sunnah. Sunnah will prevail over culture and customs which contradict it. Without deen, dunya (meaning a person's worldly engagement) will be dirty and impure. The dunya becomes deen when it is in accordance to the commands of the creator.

The benefits of dunya is in front of everyone, hence practising on the promises of dunya, however flawed, is easy. No one has to give a lecture to reach for food when hungry. On the contrary, the benefits of a'mals of deen are hidden from the people, thus practising on deen is difficult, even though it's benefit is true and everlasting. People will never see the benefit of a'mals of deen until they sacrifice for the sake of deen - as it is said in the case of baraka, you want to know what is baraka? then do the a'mal of baraka, then see it!

Baraka is only with those in obedience. If Allah enriches one who is obedient then it's like Sulaiman and Daud عليه السلام. If Allah enriches a disobedient then its like Pharaoh and Karun.

If any difficulty comes to an obedient then it is like Yunus ﷺ, when he was in the belly of the fish, and Ayyub ﷺ in the form of a prolonged disease. If difficulty comes to a disobedient then it is like Karun when he was swallowed by the earth and Pharaoh who sank in the sea. But there is a great difference between the two types of difficulties.

The blessings of infusing deen in life will manifest in this world in the form of a good life, righteous deeds, tranquillity in all aspects of life etc. [2]. Allah ﷻ says:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ

> Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer verily, to him We will give a good life. [16:97]

Further, when believers have taqwa and they speak in a straightforward manner, with no crookedness or distortion, then Allah promises to reward them by making their deeds righteous, He will forgive their past sins and He will inspire them to repent from future sins [2]:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ۝ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ ۝

> O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous deeds and will forgive you your sins. [33:70-1]

The foundation of the social interaction of Rasulullah ﷺ is purity, simplicity & modesty. On the contrary, the foundation of hedonistic life, which is driven primarily in the western societies, is shamelessness, wastefulness and luxury. So how can you begin to love their way?

Through deen Islam people lift themselves from selfishness. This deen engenders a caring society. Poverty does not equate to careless society - most of the sahaba ﷺ were living below poverty line. Ibn 'Umar ﷺ says [17]:

> One sahabi received a goat's head as a present. He thought of a neighbour who had a larger family and was in greater need of it than himself, and presented the same to him. This brother, on receipt of the present, recollected yet another person whom he considered even more deserving than himself, and sent on the head to him. The goat's head is said to have changed hands

no less than seven times, and at last came back to the original person from whom the circulation had started.

'Adi bin Hatim ﷺ said [3]:

> While I was in the city of the prophet, a man came and complained to him ﷺ of destitution and poverty. Then another man came and complained of robbery (by highwaymen).
>
> Rasulullah ﷺ said: *Adi! Have you been to al-Hira?*
> I said: I haven't been to it, but I heard about it.
>
> He said: *If you should live for a long time, you will certainly see that a lady in a Howdah travelling from al-Hira will perform the tawaf of the Ka'bah, fearing none but Allah.*
> I said to myself: What will happen to the robbers of the tribe of Tai who have spread evil throughout the country?
>
> Rasulullah ﷺ further said: *If you should live long, the treasures of Khosrau will be opened.*
> I asked: You mean Khosrau, son of Hurmuz?
> He said: *Khosrau, son of Hurmuz; and if you should live long, you will see that one will carry a handful of gold or silver and go out looking for a person to accept it from him, but will find none to accept it from him. …*

'Adi added: (later on) I saw a lady in a Howdah travelling from al-Hira till she performed the tawaf of the Ka'bah, fearing none but Allah. And I was one of those who opened the treasures of Khosrau, son of Hurmuz. If you should live long, you will see what the prophet Abu-l-Qasim had said: *'A person will come out with a handful of gold…*etc. [3].

Once Jareer ibn 'Abd-Allah al-Bajali ﷺ commanded his freed slave to buy a horse for him. So he bought him a horse for three hundred dirhams, and he brought the horse and its owner to him so that he could pay him the money. Jareer said to the owner of the horse – look at this sincerity – "Your horse is worth more than three hundred dirhams. Will you sell it for four hundred dirhams?" He said, "Yes, O Abu 'Abd-Allah."

He said, "Your horse is worth more than four hundred dirhams. Will you sell it for five hundred dirhams?" He kept increasing it by one hundred each time, with the owner agreeing and Jareer saying, "Your horse is worth more

than that," until he reached eight hundred, for which price he bought it. And he said concerning that, "I gave my oath of allegiance (bay'ah) to Rasulullah ﷺ that I would be sincere towards every Muslim." [43]

Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz ﷺ who was a great-grandson of Umar ﷺ became an Umayyad khalifa and revived the equity and justice of khalifa rashidun. After becoming khalifa he left the Umayyad palace and built a two room house on the outskirts of the city. A poor lady once came to Umar's house seeking charity and saw a raggedly-dressed man patching holes in the building's walls. She asked Umar's wife, "Don't you fear Allah? Why don't you veil in the presence of this man?" The woman was shocked to learn that the "servant" was in fact the khalifa himself.

With a'mals of deen sahaba ﷺ pleased Allah and He sent ayat of Qur'an in their appreciation. For their establishing this enlightened brotherhood Allah says:

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۞

> And those who were settled in al-Madinah and adopted the faith before, love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts of what emigrants were given (from booty), and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whoever is saved from his own avarice, such are they who are successful. [59:9]

Even high status in society was not an obstacle for the sahaba ﷺ to remain humble and meek. Reported by Ahu Huraira ﷺ [4]:

> Rasulullah ﷺ said: *Who amongst you is fasting today?*
> Abu Bakr said: I am.
> He (again) said: *Who amongst you followed a funeral procession today?* Abu Bakr said: I did.
> He (the Prophet) again said:*Who amongst you served food to the needy?* Abu Bakr said: I did.
> He (again) said: *Who amongst you has today visited the sick?*
> Abu Bakr said: I did.
> Thereupon Rasulullah ﷺ said: *Anyone in whom (these good deeds) are combined will certainly enter paradise.*

By rectifying their a'mals, the sahaba ﷺ reached such heights that Allah ﷻ sent angels in honour in this earthly life: angels brought salam from Allah ﷻ to Khadijah ﷺ and Abu Bakr ﷺ, angels came to wash their dead bodies (eg. Hanzala ﷺ), seventy thousand angels came down to join the janaza of Saad ibn Mu'adh ﷺ. With the same a'mals, we can also please Allah.

When deen was saturated in the lives of sahaba ﷺ others begun to appreciate their way of life, they saw the beauty of the deen and begun to enter en-masse. So when they travelled for business etc. people used to get affected by their qualities. They used to say simply, "Be like us."

Before Islam sahaba ﷺ had wars over which camel drank before which. After Islam, they were staying hungry to feed others. People from surrounding areas were coming to Madina to see their new lives - this new revolution.

... ★ ...

The Revealed Rules are More Serious Than the Apparent Rules Governing the Creations

Divine rules through revelation (*wahy*) are momentous and more serious than the apparent rules governing creations. The revealed laws govern how people live their lives and interact with others, it defines the sole parameter for eventual success or failure, to an eternal destination. With the limited will powers, that Allah endowed humanity with, they will interact with others and live through this life. Surrendering this will to Allah desiring His pleasure is a recognition of the true reality. But if one waste this will power by following temporary pleasures, then it makes the person becomes worthless, to be destined for Jahannam.

In contrast, apparent laws governing the systems of this universe such as food and water cycles; orbits of the sun & moon; functions of the heart, eyes, ears; systems running within our body to regulate temperature, sugar, water; process food to extract nutrients, are set by Allah. All these are created to serve mankind, they will not be asked about their functions on the Day of Judgement. These are creations which point to the supreme power of their creator.

Allah has programmed everything before they came into existence in Lawhul Mahfuz. Everything was created using well proportioned measured laws. Allah's rules of creation will never change - these are found through experience and scientific investigations. If we follow these rules, we will benefit more and more. Not doing so will harm us. Those who hold the true recognition of this, in fact, turn to Allah:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ۞ الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۞

> Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding, who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying]: Our Lord, You did not create all this without purpose; glory to You; Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire. [3:190-1]

The rules of deen which was sent through wahy govern the success of people, it is sent through the prophets. The object of deeni knowledge is to know what is the command directed at me at every moment and condition and how to fulfil it. The nations that believed their prophets succeeded and nations that paid no heed to warnings from their prophets faced destruction. The calamities and punishment which come due to flouting revealed laws cannot be repelled by following apparent laws.

The scope and the effect of apparent laws are very limited. For example, in the case of human beings if we ignore the rules of sustaining our body, which is essentially a garment for our soul in this earthly life, then at worst case, this can take us to our death. One can survive a couple of weeks without food, or survive a couple of days without a drink, or survive a couple of minutes without oxygen. But one cannot live without hidaya, which is required in every second of life. No one can afford to fall foul of the divine rules, that can land one in Jahannam where the problems never end.

There is simply no comparison in importance between the two types of needs. Sahaba ﷺ used to say, "Rasulullah ﷺ would mingle with us as if he is one of us. But when he would hear the call of the adhan, he would cut off

from us as if he does not know us." Rasulullah ﷺ loved A'isha ؓ so much, yet when she remarked about another lady of being short, the face of Rasulullah ﷺ changed.

Rasulullah ﷺ was weeping when a man's hand was being cut due to stealing. Upon enquiry he ﷺ said:

> *Even if my daughter Fatima ؓ did the same crime then she would have faced the same penalty, The law of Allah is above everything. I am only crying because the hand of one of my ummati is being cut.*

Abu Bakr ؓ had a slave who used to give him a portion of his daily income as the master's share. Once he brought him some food, and Abu Bakr ؓ took a morsel out of it. Then the slave remarked: "You always enquire about the source of what I bring to you, but today you have not done so." He replied: "I was feeling so hungry that I failed to do that. Tell me now, how did you come by this food?"

The slave said, "Before I embraced Islam, I practised soothsaying. During those days I came across some people for whom I practised some of my charms. They promised to pay me for that later on. I happened to pass by those people today, while they were engaged in a marriage ceremony, and they gave me this food."

Abu Bakr ؓ exclaimed, "Ah! You would have surely killed me?" Then he tried to vomit the morsel he had swallowed, but could not do so, as his stomach had been quite empty. Somebody suggested to him to take water to his fill and then try to vomit. He sent for a goblet of water and kept on taking water and forcing it out, till the morsel was vomited out.

Somebody remarked: "May Allah have mercy on you! You put yourself to such trouble for one single morsel." To this Abu Bakr ؓ replied: "I would have thrust it out even if I had to lose my life. I have heard Rasulullah ﷺ saying. '*The flesh nourished by haram food, is destined for the fire of hell.*' I, therefore, made haste to vomit this morsel, lest any portion of my body should receive nourishment from it [44]."

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *There is no obedience for created things in a matter of disobedience to Creator [4].*

Sahaba ﷺ left us with many examples showing firm observance of this principle.

Related by Sa'd ibn abi Waqqas ﷺ [21]:

> When my mother heard the news of my Islam, she flew into a rage. She came up to me and said: "O Sa'd! What is this religion that you have embraced which has taken you away from the religion of your mother and father? By Allah, either you forsake your new religion or I would not eat or drink until I die. Your heart would be broken with grief for me and remorse would consume you on account of the deed which you have done and people would censure you forever more."
>
> "Don't do (such a thing), my mother," I said, "for I would not give up my religion for anything." However, she went on with her threat. For days she neither ate nor drank. She became emaciated and weak. Hour after hour, I went to her asking whether I should bring her some food or something to drink but she persistently refused, insisting that she would neither eat nor drink until she died or I abandoned my religion.
>
> I said to her: "O mother! In spite of my strong love for you, my love for Allah and His messenger is indeed stronger. By Allah, if you had a thousand souls and one soul after another were to depart, I would not abandon this my religion for anything."
> When she saw that I was determined she relented unwillingly and ate and drank.

Allah ﷻ does not have any relation with anybody. Instead, He has some rules. Honour or disgrace is not in the means or designs of others, rather it is in the hands of Allah, and for which we have divine rules. When Jews despite being descendants of prophets broke divine rules, then Allah broke them. Sahaba ﷺ were the children of polytheists, they obeyed the divine rules by performing the a'mals of success, Allah thus made them successful.

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Promises of Allah سبحانه وتعالى & His Messenger is With His Deen

The promises of Allah ﷻ are not attached to Muslim names but the promises of Allah ﷻ are with deen and 24 hour life of a believer can be according to deen. Simply performing selective a'mals is not deen - one must take care of relative importance as well as priorities according to shari'ah.

We know removing obstacles from the road is from deen, to the extent that Rasulullah ﷺ said it's part of eman, but we do not find any prophet spending 24 hours removing obstacles from the road. Similarly, we do not find people continue reciting Qur'an when muazzin gives iqamah for salat.

Some of these priorities are:

Worship over necessities: Earning halal sustenance is from deen. Spending time with family is from deen. Sleeping at night is from deen. However, if any of these activities become an obstacle in performing other commands of Allah, such as salat and enjoining good and forbidding evil, then that is not from deen. It is said that when it's time for salat Rasulullah ﷺ used to leave his family as if he was a stranger.

Knowledge over worship: Knowledge precedes action. Worshipping without correct knowledge can invalidate the a'mal. The basic knowledge which enables a person to follow the commands of Allah ﷻ and refrain from haram is compulsory upon every man and woman.

Eman over knowledge: Eman is the foundation. If eman is firm then rest of the deen will be in order. How many people fail to perform an a'mal, for instance daily five times salat despite having the knowledge of the importance of that action and knowledge of performing it? The Orientalists learnt various aspects of deen but it does not bring them close to Allah! As Umar ﷺ mentioned sahaba ﷺ learnt eman, then they learnt Qur'an.

Without yaqin, no one can be obedient to Allah. Knowledge only distinguishes between right and wrong. Knowledge is guidance, yaqin puts it into practice. So the effort to strengthen the eman to the level that it enables one to perform obligatory a'mals and refrain from haram is of utmost priority.

In Makkah, where Muslims were living a life of insecurity and persecution upon them was increasing day by day and, Allah ﷻ revealed the following verse:

سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ ۞

Their multitude will be put to flight, and they will show their backs. [54:45]

Allah ﷻ promised this to believers in Makkah when they were very weak. This ayat came to assure and strengthen the believers. A'isha ﷺ used to recite this in Makkah while playing as a child.

Sahaba ﷺ had absolute yaqin or certainty in the promises made by Rasulullah ﷺ. Once Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *The white palaces of Hirah were brought before me and I saw Princess Shima' daughter of Nafilah Azdiah, wearing a black veil was riding a red mule.*

One sahabi who was present with him, Khuraim ﷺ enquired, "O Rasulullah, if we ride victoriously into Hirah and find the Princess Shima' as you have described, would the Princess be mine?" Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "*Yes, she would be yours*". Besides the victory over Hirah, this prophecy contains the fact that Khuraim and Princess Shima' would be alive at that time.

Khuraim ﷺ relates, During the reign of Abu Bakr ﷺ, when we conquered Hirah, we saw the scene exactly as the Rasulullah had told us. Shima' wear-

ing a veil was coming towards us riding on a mule. I clung to the mule and claimed that Rasulullah had given the Princess as a gift to me. The commander of the army Khalid bin Walid ﷺ called me over and asked me to provide the proof of my claim. I presented Muhammad bin Maslamah ﷺ and Muhammad bin Bashir Ansari ﷺ as my witnesses. This was accepted and Shima' was handed over to me. Her brother came to me for negotiating some agreement and asked me to sell her back to him. I told him that I would not accept less than one thousand dirhams. He immediately paid me this sum and I returned Shima' to him. My companions said to me afterwards that if I had demanded ten thousand dirhams, he would have given them to me. They asked, "Why did you demand only one thousand?" I replied, "I do not even know how to count more than one thousand [45]."

Promises are made on correct eman and a'mals of the body, not on means. However, we should practice deen because its the command of Allah ﷻ - not to get a certain benefit, or to get out of certain trouble in this life.

Allah ﷻ promised the believers:

إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا ۖ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقًّا ۚ إِنَّهُ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ

> To Him is your return all together. The promise of Allah is true. It is He who begins the creation and then repeats it, that He may reward with justice those who believed and did deeds of righteousness. [10:4]

Sahaba ﷺ developed their yaqin to such a level that their trust upon the statements of Allah ﷻ and His messenger was unshakable in the face of observation, logic and reason. If deen comes alive, none of the kufr systems will survive. Shaitan says get loans on interest to fulfil your needs. So they want to help, calling out, "Take loans on interest and you will prosper". This is how shaitan entices us! On the contrary, Allah said interest diminishes wealth and sadaqa increases wealth.

Narrated on the authority of Anas bin Malik ﷺ [3]:

> Umm ar-Rubai bint al-Bara, the mother of Haritha bin Suraqa came to Rasulullah ﷺ and said, "O Rasulullah ﷺ ! Will you tell me about Haritha?" Haritha has been martyred on the day of Badr with an arrow thrown by an unidentified person. She added, "If

he is in Jannah, I will be patient; otherwise, I will weep bitterly for him."
He said: *O mother of Haritha! There are Gardens in Paradise and your son got the Firdaus Al-Ala*."

Thus words of Rasulullah ﷺ was sufficient as solace for her.

Promises are not made on acquiring or utilising asbabs. Therefore a sick person who says, "I will take medicine and do tawakkul on Allah ﷻ " is wrong because medicine is an asbab and there is no promise on this. Tawakkul will be needed after acquiring a deeni solution to problems which has been conveyed to us through Rasulullah ﷺ.

Help of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is With His Obedience - Corrupt Eman, Yaqin & A'mals Hinder it

Mu'mins follow the commands of Allah ﷻ and have patience with circumstance! We don't want the deen of environment, or deen of condition & circumstance, we need the deen of commandments.

When Musa عليه السلام and his followers reached the red sea the weak believers became very nervous. They faced the sea while being chased by the enemy at the back. So he assured them:

فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَى الْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ ۞ قَالَ كَلَّا ۖ إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ ۞

> And when the two hosts saw each other, the companions of Musa said: "We are sure to be overtaken." [Musa] said: "Nay, verily! With me is my Lord, He will guide me." [26:61-2]

Why? Because it was due to the command of Allah that he was doing everything, going to Egypt for da'wah, and leaving Egypt by the command of Allah. This is in sharp contrast to the first time when he escaped from Egypt due to a murder, and he even got lost on the way. But this time it is by the command of Allah. Musa عليه السلام had the yaqin in Allah, the common people do not see this. Hence people are commanded to follow prophets. By following the prophets one will see the benefit of deen.

Allah's help comes when the a'mals are based on yaqin, are not mixed with other things. Eman also increased through being steadfast on a'mals. Thus we need to develop our yaqin and then act upon that yaqin.

فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنِ اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْبَحْرَ ۖ

Then We inspired to Musa, "Strike with your staff the sea," [26:63]

The obedience of Musa ﷺ is exemplary. When Musa ﷺ was asked to strike the sea with his staff, he did not enter into an argument with Allah - why should I hit the sea? or You can make way just by making a Will! or Pharaoh should be struck with it! There was no direct benefit of hitting the sea - benefits come with following the commands of Allah.

The help of Allah ﷻ is with the truth. The Quraish refused to help Rasulullah ﷺ, so Allah ﷻ prepared Madinites for help. The Quraish were in good circumstances, they had power, wealth & respect in Arabia. They didn't support truth - they were disgraced. The opposite was the case of the Madinites who were poor, in problems, people ravaged by war. After supporting truth they were elevated every single way.

Asbab has no qudrah or promises, but in obedience to His commandments there is qudrah and promises of Allah. There is no tranquillity [46] in asbab. Asbabs are for tests. Tranquillity is in obedience. To benefit from the qudrah of Allah ﷻ we must remove dunya out of our hearts. Allah ﷻ knows our heart, He knows what we hold true in the heart, He is not beguiled by the sweet tongue.

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ explains:

> This tongue is such a hypocrite that it speaks what's at the heart or what is contrary to it. Imagine someone who just had the evening meal and informed his wife he will get to rest. At that very moment, there was a knock at the door. Would he not feel very angry that he had come in such a bad time. Yet the person may respond to the knock by saying with tongue, "I am very glad about your coming", not saying what's in the heart, saying contrary to what is at heart …Tomorrow on the day of judgement the tongue will only utter what's in the heart.

Work such a way that the help of Allah comes. Pharaoh enslaved the believers of Children of Israel until there came a time when Allah ﷻ decided to

send Musa ﷺ to give da'wah to both Pharaoh and the believers. Musa ﷺ instructed his people to put full trust in Allah ﷻ and perform salat in their homes as they were unable to do so in public [2].

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَا قَوْمِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ آمَنْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ فَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُوا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُسْلِمِينَ ۞ فَقَالُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا ...

> And Musa said, "O my people, if you have believed in Allah, then put your trust in Him if you are Muslims (indeed surrendered)." So they said, "In Allah we put our trust... [10:84-5]

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَأَخِيهِ أَنْ تَبَوَّآ لِقَوْمِكُمَا بِمِصْرَ بُيُوتًا وَاجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۞

> And We inspired to Musa and his brother: "Settle your people in Egypt in houses, and make your houses as places for worship, and establish salat, and give glad tidings to the believers." [10:87]

Thus the the Children of Israel rectified their eman & a'mal. However, their persecution further increased instead of reducing! Musa ﷺ told them to exercise patience:

قَالُوا أُوذِينَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا وَمِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا ۚ قَالَ عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ عَدُوَّكُمْ وَيَسْتَخْلِفَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ۞

> They said: "We had suffered troubles before you came to us, and since you have come to us." He said: "It may be that your Lord will destroy your enemy and make you successors on the earth, so that He may see how you act?" [7:129]

So after all these tests, purification of their yaqin, establishing a'mals and patience, finally Allah brought His help to Musa ﷺ and his people. Even now when people accustom themselves doing good a'mal and bring themselves to the effort of deen but problems can increase instead of decrease. They can become nervous and think of quitting, but it's not the time to give up, that could be a test from Allah.

Upon the same condition Allah gave His help in the battle of Badr. At Badr sahaba ﷺ had these three core qualities of taqwa, tawaqqul and patience to qualify for divine help:

إِذْ هَمَّتْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ تَفْشَلَا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّهُمَا ۗ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۞

When two parties from among you were about to lose heart, but Allah was their ally. And in Allah should the believers put their trust. [3:122]

بَلَىٰ ۚ إِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُمْ مِنْ فَوْرِهِمْ هَٰذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آلَافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ ۞

Yes, if you hold on to patience and piety, and the enemy comes rushing at you; your Lord will help you with five thousand distinguished angels. [3:125]

As explained by Maulana Umar Palanpuri ﷺ, the situation in Uhud and Hunayn was different due to weaknesses in few sahaba ﷺ. Allah ﷻ gave a detailed feedback on these two battles so that all the people until the Hour know for what reason the help of Allah is withdrawn and when it is hindered.

وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُمْ بِإِذْنِهِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَرَاكُمْ مَا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ۚ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۞

And Allah did indeed fulfil His promise to you when you were killing them with His permission; until you lost your courage and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed after He showed you (booty) which you love. Among you are some that desire this world and some that desire the hereafter. Then He made you flee from them, that He might test you. But surely, He forgave you, and Allah is Most Gracious to the believers. [3:152]

Here, at the mountain-top, a chain of events had taken place:

- A few sahaba ﷺ had an undue inclination towards materials, their sight shifted from the creator to creation. We must not have any love for dunya in the heart even if that thing is halal (such as booty).
- The above characteristics caused some of them to give opinions keeping the benefit of dunya in front rather than akhira.
- Differences of opinion, though in itself not blameworthy, in their case it led to disunity which is blameworthy and
- Eventually, some of them disobeyed their ameer, which is disobedience to Allah & His messenger.

Due to unfolding of these events, Allah ﷻ withdrew His help. Deficiency on the part of a few sahaba ﷺ thus led to endangering the whole community but Allah ﷻ forgave them after reprimanding them severely. This was a lesson for all the Muslims until Qiyamah.

Love of dunya is an extremely dangerous disease which endangers the whole community, even if they are a tiny minority among them - it causes fitnah by moulding opinions according to wrong priority and yaqin. Thus to prevent such eventuality we must work on our hearts so that we see and utilise the asbabs of this world in light of the commands of Allah.

The help of Allah was delayed in Hunayn. After the conquest of Makkah, the number of Muslims swelled and a few new Muslims started saying the Muslims will win due to their sheer manpower. In the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ gave accounts of numerous incidences to rectify precisely this kind of corrupt yaqin. At Hunayn sahaba ﷺ gained a first-hand experience of this:

لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ ۙ وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ ۙ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُمْ مُدْبِرِينَ ۞

> Truly Allah has given you victory on many battle fields, and on the Day of Hunayn when you rejoiced at your great number but it availed you naught and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight. [9:25]

The events of Uhud and Hunayn further underlines the fact that even though the sahaba ﷺ involved were a tiny minority, and despite the fact that they were out in the path of Allah and with the best of prophets; they were free of shirk and punctual in their salat, zakat, dhikr and other a'mals, Allah ﷻ did not tolerate their sight on creation or any lapse in yaqin and it undermined and endangered all.

Thus to secure the help of Allah ﷻ full tawaqqul in Him is a must (just like Badr). This does not contradict the need for preparation which is also a command of Allah but the issue here is a matter of yaqin which must be correct to qualify for the help of Allah. Test on tawaqqul is inevitable - so we must remind ourselves again and again that success is in fulfilling the commands of Allah, success is not in amassing asbabs and failure is not in the scarcity of asbabs.

Help of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ is With Ameer & Jama'ah

One of the important characteristics of this ummah is that it conducts its affairs collectively. In fact, there are certain a'mals which cannot be done without jama'ah. For example Jumu'ah, Janaza and Eid salat.

وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ۞

> And whoever contradicts and opposes the messenger after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the believers' way - We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in hell – what an evil destination. [4:115]

It is obligatory to remain with the jama'ah. Jama'ah strengthens believers just like bricks support and strengthens a wall. It provides the security of their eman and deeni life. There are many hadith in which we can find the necessity of forging brotherhood and establishing unity:

> *Allah ﷻ will say on the day of Judgement: Where are those who loved each other for my sake? I will shade them today, when there is no shade but mine [4].*

> *The merciful hands of Allah are always on the jama'ah, and those who stray away from it are on the path to hell [5].*

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *I enjoin upon you five things: a collective life (jama'ah), listening, obeying, migrating (hijrah), and striving hard in Allah's way (jihad). He who goes away from the jama'ah as much as a hand span has removed the tie of Islam from his neck, unless he returns to it's fold. And he who calls people to rally round Jahiliyya, belongs to the people of hell, even if he prays and fasts and claims he is a Muslim [8, 5].*
>
> *Whoever departs from the jama'ah, even a hand's breadth, has indeed removed the rope of Islam from his neck [6, 8].*
>
> *Allah will not cause my ummah to agree on falsehood; the Hand of Allah is with the jama'ah [5].*

The meaning of this hadith is that Allah has protected the scholars of the ummah of Muhammad ﷺ from unanimously agreeing upon something false. This protection is only for all the scholars of the ummah during any given period. As for the agreement of some of them or most of them on something, that is not protected from error [47].

Abu 'Eesa at-Tirmidhi ﷺ said in his Sunan: What is meant by the jama'ah, according to the scholars, is the scholars of fiqh, knowledge and hadith.

Al-Mulla 'Ali al-Qaari ﷺ said: The hadith indicates that if the Muslims unanimously agree on something, then it must be true, and what is meant is the unanimous agreement of the scholars. The consensus of the common folk does not carry any weight, because it is not based on knowledge [48].

Without a leader, the community falls prey to shaitan and chaos ensues. We find in sahaba ﷺ giving precedent to the selection of ameer over the burial of the body of Rasulullah ﷺ due to the importance of political leadership of the ummah. In every matter, Muslims should have an ameer who would draw on the right manpower to guide the community. Rasulullah ﷺ gave priority to appointing of ameer in even such matters as travelling, let alone salat with jama'ah and governorship. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *When three (people) go out on a journey, they should appoint one of them as their leader [6].*

Muslims must follow those in authority except in the case when they are ordered to do that which is contrary to the commands of Allah ﷻ.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ ۖ

> O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the messenger, and those of you who are in authority among you. [4:59]

This is corroborated by the sayings of Rasulullah ﷺ:

> *I advise you to fear Allah and to listen and obey, even if a slave is appointed over you. So whoever from amongst you lives, then he will see much differing. So hold onto my Sunnah and the Sunnah of my Rightly Guided Khalifas after me* [49].

> *You are obligated to hear and to obey in prosperity and adversity, willingly or unwillingly, and even when you are treated unjustly [4].*

> *He who obeys me obeys Allah and he who disobeys me disobeys Allah, and he who obeys the one in authority obeys me but he who disobeys the person in authority disobeys me [3, 4].*

Hudhayfa ibn al-Yaman reported [4]:

> I asked, "O Rasulullah, we were living in an evil time and Allah brought us good in which we live now. Will there be evil after this good?"
> Rasulullah ﷺ said, "*Yes.*"
> I said, "And any good after this evil?"
> The Prophet said, "*Yes.*"
>
> I said, "And any evil after this good?"
> The Prophet said, "*Yes.*"
>
> I said, "How will it be?"
> The Prophet said, "*Rulers after me will come who do not follow my guidance and my Sunnah. Some of their men will have the hearts of devils in a human body.*"
>
> I said, "O Rasulullah, what should I do if I live to see that time?"
> The Prophet said, "*You should listen and obey them, even if the ruler strikes your back and takes your wealth, even still listen and obey.*"

Related by Abdullah ibn Masud ﷺ [3, 4]:

> Rasulullah ﷺ said, '*After me there will be discrimination and things you dislike.*'
> He ﷺ was asked, 'O Rasulullah. What would be your advice to those of us who encounter these things?'
> He answered, '*Fulfil your obligations and supplicate to Allah for your rights.*'

The following story indicates a limit of the ameer. Narrated by Ali ﷺ [3, 4, 8]:

> Rasulullah ﷺ sent a troop under the command of a man from ansaar. When they left, he became angry with them for some reason and said to them, 'Has not Rasulullah ﷺ commanded you to obey me?'
> They said, 'Yes.'
> He said, 'Collect some wood,' and then he started a fire with the wood, saying, 'I command you to enter the fire.'
>
> The people almost entered the fire, but a young man among them said, 'You only ran away from the Fire to Allah's messenger. Therefore, do not rush until you go back to Rasulullah ﷺ, and if he commands you to enter it, then enter it.'
>
> When they went back to Rasulullah ﷺ, they told him what had happened, and Rasulullah ﷺ said, "*Had you entered it, you would never have departed from it. Obedience is only in righteousness.*"

'Umar ibn al-Khattab ﷺ said:

> There is no Islam without a community, and there is no community without a leadership, and there is no authority without hearing and obeying [50].

No one should refuse ameer's command. People gave opinions in contradiction to Abu Bakr ﷺ in sending the army of Usama ﷺ but agreed to followed suit when he made a decision.

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said:

> This ummah is formed through shedding the blood and hunger of Rasulullah ﷺ and his sahaba ﷺ. And now we break this ummah upon minor disagreements. If the Muslim ummah can achieve

unity, then they will never be humiliated or disgraced. Even superpowers of the day will yield in front of them. The unity in the ummah will only come when humbleness towards muminineen will become the norm amongst the Muslims (أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ) [51]. That is to say, every Muslim will consider her/him to be lowly compared to others, and take gentleness and humbleness. In tabligh errand, it is practised as well [16].

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ also said:

> Remember that words like my nation, my locality and my brothers split the ummah. And in the sight of Allah, such words are so despicable that such great sahaba as Sa'd ibn Ubayda ﷺ had to pay for the mistake he made in this matter before he left this world.
>
> It is reported in hadith that jinns killed him, it was heard in Madina but no one found the one making this announcement, "We annihilated the leader of the Khajraj tribe, we made him target of our arrows and it penetrated his chest."
>
> From this incident, we understand that even if the best of the best person from the ummah begins to call to tribalism or localisms to break the unity of the ummah, then Allah ﷻ will also break him to waste.
>
> For this reason, I say the ummah will not be made simply by kalima and tasbih. Ummah will be made through purification of social interactions, business transactions and by giving rights of everyone, by honouring everyone. Rather it will be made when we forsake our rights or what's due on us and sacrifice our benefits or advantages for the sake of others.

In building and corrupting the ummah, in uniting or disuniting the ummah, the tongue plays one of the most important roles - this tongue can unite the hearts or break hearts. One small yet wrong and evil statement comes out of the tongue and whips follow and fitnah is created. And a small statement can unite and cement broken hearts. This is why it is of utmost importance that we have control over the tongue, and this will only be possible when the slave realises that Allah is with him all the time and He hears everything!

Ummah is not the name of a tribe or residents of a certain land. Rather thousands of tribes and localities constitute the ummah. The one who considers one tribe or one locality his own and the rest as others, slaughters the ummah, and breaks it into pieces, and throws water at the effort of Rasulullah ﷺ.

Rasulullah ﷺ gave glad tidings and also warned [8, 11]:

> *Tell this ummah the good news of high rank, might, exaltation, deen and firm establishment in the land. Yet, if any of them, does the deed of akhira for worldly benefits, they will have no portion in the akhira.*

Prophets Were not Sent for Material Well-being, They are Sent With Guidance

Every single prophet faced a particular form of beliefs or structures which contradicted the pure belief of tawhid, or fitra (innate human nature) or the fidelity and justice of Islam. We can list a few of these crooked beliefs and systems:

Nooh عليه السلام **:** His people worshipped idols. Allah poured water from above and below to flood them, saving only those in the Ark of Nooh.

Hud عليه السلام **:** Huge size and strength of people of 'Ad made them tyrannical and believers of might. They built mighty palaces in the city of Iram, considered buried in the desert of Oman. They were destroyed by a furious wind.

Sulaiman عليه السلام **:** The people of Sheba lived in Southern Arabia during the time of Prophet Sulaiman. Allah ﷻ blessed them with beautiful gardens. They developed advanced agricultural technology with dams. They used to worship the sun. Instead of being grateful to Allah ﷻ, they claimed prosperity to their ingenuity and hard work.

Salih عليه السلام **:** The nation of Thamud was known for its mastery of masonry. They felt secure against Allah in their palaces curved in rocky mountains. When they denied the message of Allah ﷻ, punishment came in the form of a sound that destroyed them and kept buildings intact.

Ibrahim ﷺ **:** The people of Nimrud worshipped moon-god and idols made by their own hands. Their might and power only made them arrogant.

Lut ﷺ **:** He was the nephew of Ibrahim ﷺ. He lived amongst a powerful people who practised sodomy, a perversion unknown to the world up until then. When they didn't pay heed to warnings of Lut ﷺ, Allah ﷻ punished them by turning their land upside down and rained down with brimstones - now considered to be in the Dead sea.

Musa ﷺ **:** He gave da'wah to Pharaoh and his people as well as Children of Israel. Egyptians practised a polytheistic religion involving priests as intermediaries, black magic and witchcraft. Pharaoh, who deified themselves through this religion ruled with supreme economic and military prowess, rejected the da'wah of Musa ﷺ the most arrogantly and thus met their deaths drowned in the Red Sea.

Shuaib ﷺ **:** His people were renowned traders who built up a lot of wealth through unfair and deceitful trading practices, cheating in weighing and highway robbery. They lived in Madyan and ascribed divinity to false gods. For their persistent denial and insulting Shuaib ﷺ, Allah ﷻ destroyed them in an earthquake.

It was the prophet's job to explain the shirk and oppression so they enter into the mercy of their creator and attain success. If a'mal is correct then even in small structures or forms Allah ﷻ will give success. On the other hand, if the a'mal is corrupt then Allah ﷻ will show destruction despite huge structures or sophisticated systems. Hence, for success rectify the a'mal whatever the condition, system or structure.

Every prophet thus made effort on the system they found themselves in. The effort of Rasulullah ﷺ was not shaped by existing designs or means but his effort was founded upon sacrifice, abstinence and self-denial. This is what was needed for the foundation for an ummah that will face sum total of all the corruptions which appeared in the previous ummahs.

Falsehood spread by the means of ease and comfort, and truth spread with the tolerance of difficulties and hardship. Falsehood flourishes through materials and power, and truth flourishes with scarcity and poverty.

Oppression is using something for the purpose for which it was not intended. So someone using the car to store kitchen goods etc. is oppressing the car as over a long period of time the onions, vegetables etc. will rot and smell.

This way of using the car for storage defeats the purpose of its creation. Similarly, Allah ﷻ created the heart for His love, hope, fear etc. and when the love, hope, fear etc. of other than Allah ﷻ comes to heart, it defeats the purpose of its creation. When shaitan takes a seat in the heart, it deserves the hell. On the other hand, if the heart is used properly, if it is free from the most fundamental oppression of shirk, which is associating partners with Allah ﷻ, then goodness will come, Allah will love him, give him Jannatul Firdous.

Our physical needs of food, water, oxygen etc. are ultimately provided free of charge - they are from the physical environment - Allah ﷻ has already made arrangements for such necessities by qadr. On the contrary, hidaya which is compulsory is in the hands of Allah and must be sought from Him seventeen times a day. The effort of prophets brings about hidaya. Thus du'a and da'wah are both means of hidaya.

With light, we see the difference between a rope and a snake. Similarly, with the light of hidaya, one will see which a'mals are good or bad. A person without hidaya will see many benefits in dealings in interest. A person with hidaya will see complete destruction from Allah in dealings in interest as it destroys a whole generation of people. Dealing in interest (taking, giving, writing, witnessing) is thirty-six times worse than adultery. Allah asked us to fight nafs - instead, some of us are fighting a war against Allah.

Da'wah of every single prophet had three aspects:

Introduce Allah ﷻ : The greatness of Allah is created in man's heart through the effort of prophets. Had it not been the case of kalima, then the people all over the world would have been worshipping all sorts of things that they are surrounded by.

Explain the treasures of Allah ﷻ : Both treasures of blessings and treasures of torments can be temporary or permanent. Allah states:

وَلِلَّهِ خَزَائِنُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ۞

And to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites comprehend not. [63:7]

Show ways to get benefit and ward-off harm: Divine a'mals enable one to deal with all the troubles of this world and hereafter and gain blessings and pleasure of Allah ﷻ.

Prophets would ask people to correct their eman and a'mals. Prophets were asked to bear any hardship with patience. They would make du'as. People cannot repay their effort - they can only be rewarded by Allah.

Nooh ﷺ called his people for more than 950 years but only eighty or so embraced his deen. He gave feedback of his struggle as follows:

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا * فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَائِي إِلَّا فِرَارًا * وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَاسْتَغْشَوْا ثِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصَرُّوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا اسْتِكْبَارًا * ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُهُمْ جِهَارًا * ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ إِسْرَارًا * ...

He said: "O my Lord! Verily, I have called my people night and day. But my invitation increased them not except in flight. And verily! Every time I called unto them that You might forgive them, they thrust their fingers into their ears, covered themselves up with their garments, and persisted, and magnified themselves in pride. Then verily, I called to them openly; Then verily, I proclaimed to them in public, and secretly in private,... [71:5-9]

Musa ﷺ gave da'wah to Pharaoh and his people to Islam and Children of Israel to correct their yaqin and establish a'mals. The struggles of the ummah of Rasulullah ﷺ resemble the struggles of Children of Israel. This is why their discussion is made profusely in the Qur'an.

Rasulullah ﷺ was the most merciful and kindest of people, who loved good for them and was keen for them to be happy and prosper. There is no greater well-wisher to us than Rasulullah ﷺ. Allah ﷻ himself testifies to this in the Qur'an:

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ *

Verily, there has come unto you a messenger from amongst yourselves. It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He is anxious over you; for the believers, full of pity, kind, and merciful. [9:128]

When Rasulullah ﷺ started da'wah, the Quraish complained of their hardship and poverty so that those issues are addressed before they accept his message. They wanted solutions to their economic problems, to do irrigation, to turn mountains to create fields for agriculture or turn the mountains into gold. Rasulullah ﷺ replied that this wasn't the purpose with which

he was sent. In fact, Rasulullah ﷺ said he could ask Allah to turn mountains into gold so that he can spend as the mountain of gold walks with him. But this will not solve their problems of yaqin.

Similarly, we are unfortunately saying if we put effort on materials then our problems will be solved! Solving material problems like this will not correct the wrong aqeedah at heart. In fact, Allah sends fitnah to make us turn back to Him!

Quraish leaders came to Abu Talib and proposed that if Rasulullah ﷺ stops da'wah, then in return they will make him their king, or make him wealthiest, or marry him with the most beautiful woman etc. Rasulullah ﷺ told his uncle to inform them that even if they were to place the sun in one hand and moon in another hand, he will not give up the effort of da'wah, the effort for which he was sent.

Rasulullah ﷺ even made worry & concern for the hidaya of his worst enemies like Khalid bin Walid ﷺ who caused havoc in the battle of Uhud and Wahshi bin Harb ﷺ [52] who killed Hamza ﷺ the beloved uncle of Rasulullah ﷺ at Uhud.

To propagate deen in this world, to bring deen into our life and to pass this deen to future generations till the hour, the greatest means is the work of da'wah. Rasulullah ﷺ taught sahaba ﷺ the effort of da'wah before worship.

28

This Deen Will Enter Every Home on Earth, Either to Honour or Disgrace

Allah ﷻ promised in the Qur'an:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ۞

> It is He Who has sent His messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, to make it prevail over all religions, however much the polytheists may be averse. [9:33]

Similarly Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Indeed, this matter (Islam) will reach as far as night and day reach, and Allah will not leave a house of Madar (mud or clay) or a house of Wabar (fur of camels and goats, i.e. tents), but will surely bring it into this deen, either honouring an honourable one or disgracing an abject one; an honour by which Allah graces Islam, and a disgrace by which Allah degrades disbelief [8, 10, 12].*

Narrated by Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'As ﷺ :

> Whilst we were around Rasulullah ﷺ writing down, he was asked, "Which of the two cities is to be opened first, Constantinople or Rome ?" He replied, "*The city of Heraclius will be opened first!*" [53]

The promise of the opening of Constantinople has already taken place during the reign of Ottoman khalifa Muhammad ibn Murad Al-Fateh in 1453, it is now known as Istanbul. This leaves the second part of the prophetic tidings to be fulfilled; the opening of Rome.

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Verily, Allah has folded the earth for me, and I saw its eastern and western parts, and verily the dominion of my nation will reach as far as what has been folded to me from it, and I have been granted the two treasures: the red (the gold of khosrau) and the white (the silver of Caesar)…*

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said:

> Until we have yaqin on Allah and ibadah according to revealed knowledge, the character will not come. And until we have character, deen will not spread among others.

To be part of this auspicious time, we must prioritise, get serious about developing our eman and yaqin and start working. Maulana Ilyas ﷺ said [23]:

> Time is a moving train and the hours, minutes and seconds are like its coaches, whereas our occupations are the passengers sitting in them. Presently, our inferior materialistic occupations have gained such control of this train and coaches of our life that they are not allowing the nobler concerns of the hereafter to come in. Our work is that we should be determined to put these nobler concerns in place of mean worldly occupations: the concerns which please Allah and build our hereafter.

Allah makes this journey easy for those who come in repentance, submitting to His obedience and strives in his path:

اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ ❊

> Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills, and guides to Himself who turns to Him in repentance and in obedience. [42:13]

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ❊

> As for those who strive hard in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Our paths. And verily, Allah is with the muhsins. [29:69]

… ★ …

Allah ﷻ Wants Sacrifice & Perseverance for His Sake

Allah ﷻ inform us about the purpose of trials of this life and the role asbabs play in this:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۞

Verily! We have made that which is on earth as an adornment for it, in order that We may test them as to which of them are best in deeds. [18:7]

"Best in deeds" means doing a'mals most perfectly, that means to do them totally for Allah's sake and in accordance to sunnah [1].

Allah ﷻ encourages us to hasten to complete in this:

فَفِرُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ ۖ

So flee to Allah. [51:50]

وَفِي ذَٰلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ۞

…and for this let (all) those strive who strive for bliss. [83:26]

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ۞

And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for a paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious. [3:133]

انْفِرُوا خِفَافًا وَثِقَالًا وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۞

Go forth, whether light or heavy, and strive with your wealth and your lives in the cause of Allah. That is better for you, if you only knew. [9:41]

فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۚ

So strive as in a race in good deeds. [5:48]

Allah ﷻ outlines four dimensions of the effort that we are supposed to be working on in surah 'Asr:

وَالْعَصْرِ ۞ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۞ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۞

By time, Lo! man is a state of loss, except those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and exhort one another to the truth, and exhort one another to endurance. [103:1-3]

In explanation to this Mufti Shafi ﷺ said that complete success is not possible without nurturing all the above four qualities:

1. Eman
2. A'maal
3. Calling to truth
4. Bear hardships patiently

He further explained [54], "The first two relate to man's own development and other two relate to other people's guidance and reform…Without sincere efforts, to the best of one's ability, to invite others to the right path, one's own good deeds are not enough to one's salvation…Therefore, the Qur'an and the Sunnah make it obligatory upon every Muslim to do his best to invite others to the good deeds, and warn them against the evil acts."

The first effect of da'wah is that the da'ee changes first and foremost - like as soon as salt added to water it becomes salty. Allah wants to see us sacrifice - the best of them are at the forefront of this effort. This is why sahaba ﷺ would recite this surah when departing from a meeting to remind each other of their duties.

Mufti Shafi ﷺ said that by relying on a'mal only, and not doing "Enjoining good and forbidding evil" to his best, he is creating a problem for himself - like the hadith of the upper and lower deck of the boat. Even if we cannot

do a'mal, we should make the effort of deen. The effort on others is not conditional upon the practice of the caller. "Practice then preach" is hence wrong.

Al-Hasan al-Basri ﷺ heard a person say: "No-one may forbid what is wrong except a person who does no wrong." He remarked: "Shaitan would like that to happen to us such that nobody would forbid the wrong nor command what is right." [55]

And about patience Allah ﷻ wants the ummah to develop a general condition of perseverance against adversity:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

> O you who believe! Endure and be more patient, and remain stationed, and fear Allah, so that you may be successful. [3:200]

It is reported that Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said:

> The level of desires and emotions buried inside, mercy and restlessness coupled with matched effort and dedication will inspire and raise others to higher and higher states.
>
> …Making an effort to strengthen eman, to revive sunnah way of life, whatever hunger, thirst, tolerating hot and cold, and such struggle against difficult and testing circumstances will bring favourable changes.

Falsehood spreads in comfort and luxury, but truth spreads in difficulty and hardship. Falsehood prospers with power and materials but truth prospers in scarcity and poverty. Through the difficulty of poverty and scarcity, the corruption that is imported due to power, materials and such means of comfort and luxury will be eradicated. This effort will further develop the capacity in the ummah to endure poverty and create the zeal for sacrifice.

Sahaba ﷺ, who are our guiding stars, bore difficult circumstances for the sake of deen that it is simply unimaginable. Once Saad ibn Waqqas ﷺ went to urinate, he heard something make a noise. After relieving he found a dry piece of leather. He washed it, dried it, grounded it and then ate it - for this effort of deen. Small wonder Allah ﷻ chose them to spread His deen!

Sahaba ﷺ gave their quality time and concern for deen and thus Allah ﷻ gave their rizk in times of their necessities. One sahabi when urinating, a

mouse brought seventeen coins from its hole. Abdur Rahman ibn Auf ﷺ was buying and selling when going to urinate. Today even though every member of the family is working - worldly needs are not fulfilled! What kind of "progress" is that?

But sacrifice is something that will be compensated by Allah - in the true sense, it's a gain. For the vast majority of the work, what is this patience other than putting up with inconveniences, lack of resources or sickness etc.? Angels used to console Ibrahim bin Hussain ﷺ for sickness when blood used to ooze out of his body. Similarly, Allah ﷻ would console Rasulullah ﷺ.

Killing the nafs is not required - that would be like not eating and just working. The idea is to work against the nafs. When you kill your desire for the desire of Allah ﷻ, then you get light of Qur'an.

Sahaba ﷺ were ever ready to come to the aid of Islam at every moment. When some of the Ansar thought of ease, Allah warned them. Narrated by Aslam ibn 'Imran ﷺ that when they were fighting a mighty army of the Romans, a mujahid attacked the Roman ranks until he penetrated them. People shouted, saying, "Subhan-Allah! He has contributed to his own destruction."

Thereupon, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari ﷺ stood up, and said,

> O people! You give this interpretation to this ayat, whereas it was revealed concerning us, the Ansar, when Allah had given honour to Islam and its supporters had become many, whereupon some of us secretly said to one another …"Our wealth has been depleted, and Allah has given honour to Islam and its supporters have become many, so let us stay amidst our wealth and make up what has been depleted of it."
>
> Thereupon, Allah revealed:
>
> وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ
>
> And spend in the Path of Allah, and do not contribute to your own destruction. [2:195]
>
> refuting what we had said. So, the destruction lay in staying with our wealth and depleting it, and abandoning combat [56].

Abu Ayyub ﷺ remained fixed until he was killed and was buried in Roman land. He was 93 years old at the time. Some people use the ayat:

وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ

Do not contribute to your own destruction. [2:195]

similar to how they treat the following ayat:

لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ

O you who believe! Approach not salat. [4:43]

They suggest keeping away from all that is dangerous and harmful such as keeping away from family, business etc. due to misunderstanding. They claim we should not do something which would cause us harm or loss. The demand of this verse is completely opposite [22].

Prophets also faced many tests involving their life and wealth. Nimrud used the state apparatus to kindle a huge fire to burn Ibrahim ﷺ. Allah ﷻ asked Ibrahim ﷺ to do hijra leaving his family in the deserts of Makkah, 900 miles from his native home in Palestine. He was also tried with sacrificing his young son in his old age for the sake of Allah ﷻ.

Ibrahim ﷺ made dua that Allah ﷻ gives him (in his progeny) an ummati of such sacrifice and the dua is accepted for Muhammad ﷺ. Allah ﷻ asked him to do hijra leaving his family in the deserts of Makkah, 900 miles from his own town. He was also tried with sacrificing his beloved son in his old age for the sake of Allah ﷻ.

Abu Talha ﷺ owned the best gardens in Madinah, and they were more numerous than those of any other Ansari. One of his gardens was known by the name of Bir-Ha, and this was his most favourite resort. It was close to the Prophet's Masjid and the water of its well was sweet and abundant. When Allah ﷻ revealed the verse:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ

Never will you attain al-Birr[57], unless you spend of that which you love. [3:92]

Abu Talha ﷺ presented himself to Rasulullah ﷺ and opened his heart, "O, Prophet of Allah! I love Bir-Ha very much. As Allah wants us to spend precisely that which we love, I make over that garden to be spent in the path of Allah as you please."

Rasulullah ﷺ was very much pleased, and remarked: "*What a fine present (to Allah)! I think it would be best utilized if you distribute it among your heirs.*" Abu Talha ؓ went and acted upon the prophet's advice.

Men, women and children of sahaba ؓ understood the need to make effort for deen. In Makkah, Sumayya ؓ embraced death at the hands of her Quraish persecutors rather than give up her eman. Similarly, Um-Haram ؓ was eager to participate in the path of Allah ﷻ - she requested Rasulullah ﷺ to make du'a for that. Thus she made her grave in Cyprus [58].

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Verily, you are in a time when one who leaves a tenth of what he has been commanded is ruined. Then, there will be a time when one who practices a tenth of what he has been commanded is saved*[59].
>
> *A little while in the morning or evening spent in the path of Allah is more superior than the whole world and whatever it contains [3, 4].*

In the effort of deen even unplanned delay is not acceptable. The story of Kaab bin Malik ؓ is very instructive in this [60]. He was boycotted by the whole community for fifty days - not even greeting of salam was exchanged.

All the various conditions and circumstance etc. are endured not because we do not have money, but these are because of our deeds, these are coming directly from Allah ﷻ. You do not belong to Iran, India etc. but you belong to the ummah of Allah ﷻ. Your duty is to bring a'mals of masjid nabawi to every masjid. Whatever you might do, the purpose must not be lost. We must plan our life with due consideration to the demands of da'wah.

... ★ ...

Da'wah to Allah سبحانه وتعالى Its Necessities & Virtues are Like no Other

We need to understand the work of da'wah; its purpose, means & its virtues; characteristics of its people, its types & levels; inevitable tests & pitfalls etc. Maulana Sa'd ﷺ explains, "Da'wah of eman is for the people of eman. Da'wah of Islam is for the people of no eman."

Allah ﷻ himself gives da'wah:

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَىٰ دَارِ السَّلَامِ

And Allah invites to the abode of peace… [10:25]

Allah ﷻ calls to tawheed, to His remembrance, to sacrifice in His path and so forth. He praised those who perform da'wah. He ordered Rasulullah ﷺ to draw people's attention to His greatness in the Qur'an:

وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ

And proclaim the greatness of your Lord. [74:3]

Da'wah is the duty of every single Muslim. This is why there is an urgent need to learn this effort according to the methodology of the prophets. This is so because there is no guarantee of success or acceptance in following newly invented ways of giving da'wah.

Among the characteristics of prophetic da'wah are:

- Purity of intention. Da'wah is sincerely for Allah ﷻ and seeking reward only from Him. The intention is not adulterated by any worldly motive, such as asking anything from the people, show, status, power.
- Begin with *la ilaha illa-Allah*. This is followed by calling towards salat, zakat and other obligatory duties as well as implementing sunnah in all aspects of life.
- Other-worldly. Primarily calling people to seek means of earning their Jannah and saving from Jahannam.
- Self-driven. Meeting people door-to-door, in markets, in home-city and further afield. Often this takes the form of one-to-one da'wah.
- Travelling and migratory. Leaving home, family, homeland or any other occupation to further the work of da'wah.

Allah ﷻ exhorts us to give da'wah:

ادْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ

Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. [16:125]

قُلْ هَٰذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي ۖ

Say, "This is my way; I invite to Allah with insight, I and those who follow me… [12:108]

Allah ﷻ praises the da'ee:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ۞

And who is better in speech than he who invites to Allah, and does righteous deeds, and says: "I am one of the Muslims." [41:33]

Rasulullah ﷺ further encouraged the effort of da'wah:

> *Convey from me, even a single verse. Narrate from the children of Israel, for there is no blame in it. Whoever deliberately lies about me, let him take his seat in hellfire [3].*

> *He who called to righteousness, there would be reward (assured) for him like the rewards of those who adhered to it, without their rewards being diminished in any respect [4, 5, 6].*

Rasulullah ﷺ said to Ali ﷺ on the occasion of Battle of Khyber [15]:

> *Proceed gently, and when you decamp there, first of all invite them towards Islam and tell them the obligations towards Allah due upon them after accepting Islam. By Allah. If Allah guides even one person due to you, it is better for you than you get red camels.*

Shaykh bin Baz ﷺ said that "…calling people towards Allah is one of the vital functions, and ummah need such a service in every place and time …it may safely be stated that it comes within the purview of wajib and almost fard in the light of the injunctions contained in the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah." If no-one in a locality performs da'wah then the whole community will be sinful as its status is fardh kifayah collectively. "When anyone performs this obligatory function others are relieved of this burden of this responsibility but even then it remains waajib for the remaining persons to perform it [19]."

He further said: So it is necessary that everyone should strive hard to propagate, the message of Allah according to his status and power…
Hafidh ibn Kathir while commenting upon this verse of the Qur'an,

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ

> Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good… [3:104]

has stated that there should be a permanent group of people within the Muslim community who should assume the burden of this responsibility, propagate and publicise the message of the deen - Islamic way of life, rehearse the commandments of Allah before the people.

As for using virtues of jihad as evidence of virtues of da'wah, then this is understood from the Qur'an and understanding of the salaf.

Imam Bukhari ﷺ has mentioned a hadith of going out in the path of Allah in the chapter of walking to Jumu'ah salat, clearly indicating that "في سبيل الله" is not restricted to simply going in fighting for the sake of Allah. There is not a single shred of evidence to suggest that this hadith was narrated by Rasulullah ﷺ regarding Jumu'ah. The hadith is narrated by Abu 'Abs who

heard while going to Jumu'ah salat that Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Anyone whose feet are covered with dust in the path of Allah, shall be saved by Allah from the hell-fire [3].*

Similarly, many other hadiths can be applied for virtues of da'wah effort. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *A short while in the path of Allah, whether in the morning and in the evening, is better than the world and whatever is in it.*
> *A place in Paradise as small as the bow or lash of one of you is better than all the world and whatever is in it.*
> *And if a woman (Hur etc.) from Paradise appeared to the people of the earth, she would fill the space between Heaven and the Earth with light and pleasant scent and her head cover is better than the world and whatever is in it [3].*

Hidaya is conditional upon effort. Allah ﷻ gives hidaya through means, that is through the effort of da'wah. This is His sunnah:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝

> As for those who strive hard in Our Cause, We will surely guide them to Our Paths. And verily, Allah is with the righteous." [29:69]

If Allah ﷻ so wished He could have given da'wah with angles or through any other means. In fact, He could have given hidaya without da'wah. In seerah we find even a wolf becoming a means to hidaya [61].

Da'wah is needed for both eman & a'mal. If da'wah continues, it attracts people to deen and nothing can stop deen. Once da'wah stops, it distracts people from deen, deen will become weak. We don't get deen through money but through effort. So it is said, "Cholo, piroh, koro pabondia, koro ehtamam", meaning, "Take steps, Get moving, Get regimented and organised."

Obstacles will come in the work and help will also come. Do effort with patience - this was told to Rasulullah ﷺ. Da'wah is the source of getting close to Allah, as you introduce more people to Allah. This way the kudrah of Allah come to our favour.

Among the things Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said about da'wah are:

> Certainly, the remembrance of Allah ﷻ is the best form of worship, but the effort that turns the world into remembrance of Allah ﷻ that is even better.
>
> At a time, when the whole creation is in troubles and calamities as a result of its own errors and misguided effort, the only remedy of this situation is the revival of the effort which turn mankind's attention towards Allah ﷻ, to race to gain His beauty and qualities.
>
> In this da'wah effort, Allah promises to make the whole universe subservient to us and undertakes rectifying conditions.

Imam Abdur-Rahman ibn Naasir as-Sa'dee ﷺ said [62]:

> Jihad is of two types: A jihad by which the rectification of the Muslims is intended, and their correctness in their beliefs and their manners, and all of their religious and worldly affairs, and in their knowledge and action related education. And this type is the basis of jihad and its foundation, and built upon it is the second type of jihad. It is the jihad by which the defence against the transgressors upon Islam is intended, such as the disbelievers, and hypocrites, and the atheists and all of the enemies of the deen and their supporters.

All other deeds are subjected to conditions, but da'wah is to be carried out in all circumstances, using all wealth & lives. When Abu Bakr ﷺ emigrated to Madina with Rasulullah ﷺ he did not leave any money with the family he left behind which included a blind old father because it was for the sake of da'wah. However, when he became khalifa he went out to market for business (he was given a stipend from baitul mal). This time the purpose was not da'wah, the institution of khalifa was for the welfare of Muslims.

The effort of da'wah acts as a barrier against the punishment of Allah. When a da'ee is involved in da'wah in a community then Allah does not punish that community:

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ الْقُرَىٰ بِظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلُهَا مُصْلِحُونَ ۞

> And your Lord would not have destroyed the cities unjustly while their people were reformers. [11:117]

Compare this with the condition when Allah's punishment descended despite having pious people among them!

Maulana Inamul Hassan ﷺ said: If we do da'wah, Allah ﷻ will use "others" to benefit Muslims.

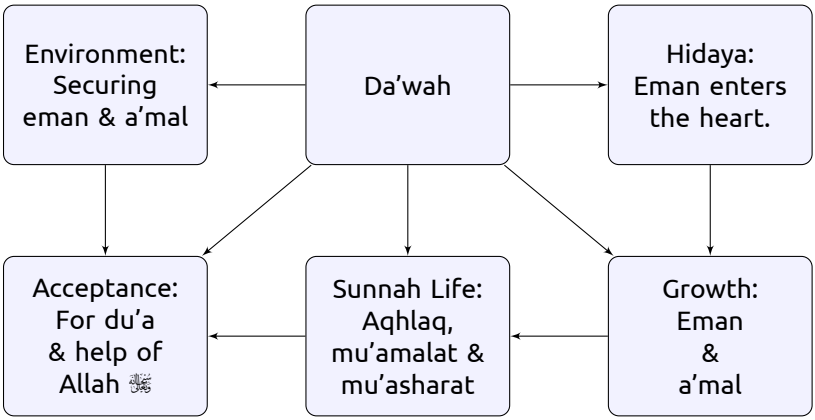
Pharaoh killed many Israeli children, yet could not stop deen. Allah ﷻ through Musa ﷺ has shown that a da'ee doesn't need anything except sincere will to do da'wah. Musa ﷺ could not even speak properly. But Musa ﷺ had a quality of da'wah which led their victory over Pharaoh.

For the above reasons, the whole world cannot face a da'ee, nor be worth the value of a da'ee. The status of a da'ee is thus so sky high. There is no effort greater than this under the sun.

... ★ ...

Field of Da'wah is the Heart Where Eman & Yaqin Reside

Da'wah is the mother of all efforts because it waters every single branch of deen. If any of the branches of deen wither, then da'wah has a role to play in its revival. The following diagram summarises how da'wah interacts with various aspects of deen:


Environment: Securing eman & a'mal
Da'wah
Hidaya: Eman enters the heart.
Acceptance: For du'a & help of Allah ﷻ
Sunnah Life: Aqhlaq, mu'amalat & mu'asharat
Growth: Eman & a'mal

The ulama give similitude for da'wah equivalent to this diagram. For example, da'wah can be compared to watering the tree; so seed is the eman, a'mals are the leaves, fruits are the akhlaq and conducts, which can be sour to begin with but can grow to become sweet. And throughout the lifetime of this tree, it must get water.

To understand da'wah effort we need to understand its relation with eman. The place of eman is not home, not masjid, not market, not the university, not factory - it is the heart. The heart, which is like the army general who directs the foot soldiers, directs all actions of the human being. Eman cannot be bought, gifted or inherited by any human being. Everyone, new-Muslim or born-Muslim, therefore, is in need of means to develop their eman.

Rasulullah ﷺ said [3, 4]:

> *Beware! There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body becomes good but if it gets spoilt the whole body gets spoilt and that is the heart.*

If eman is like the engine of a car which determines how steep it can go or how much load it can bear then yaqin is its guidance system. Everyone has a set of yaqins (certainty) that guides them, irrespective of whether they are religious, irreligious or areligious.

A new Muslim or a nominal born Muslim is a Muslim because of witnessing the shahadatains. Most aspects of their yaqins do not change straight-away, thus a continuous da'wah which challenges the corrupt yaqins is necessary for that to change to take effect and become firm in the heart. If yaqins do not change then those Muslims will practice deen out of fear or greed, if at all.

When yaqin changes then the heart will see success only in deen and failure in other than deen - when a person reaches that state then this person is made, such a person will be able to withstand external pressures and make all manner of sacrifices like the sahaba ﷺ.

Thirteen years of da'wah & struggle in Makkah and beyond ensured sahaba ﷺ completely realign their yaqins. Allah continued this da'wah among the believers to challenge those yaqins and similarly, Rasulullah ﷺ continued his da'wah among the sahaba ﷺ until a time came when the path to success was crystal clear to the ummah.

Yaqin, in Arabic, is the body of water inside a cave unaffected by the external environment. Our yakin should be like this, not susceptible to circumstances or conditions. Da'ee is not affected by the environment, rather the environment is affected by the da'ee. With this conviction, we should make da'wah our sole occupation.

Da'wah is to bring the greatness of Allah ﷻ in our hearts and prepare others for this effort. If the greatness of Allah is absent from the heart, if the yaqin does not change, then practising deen will become a burden and people will think deen is an obstacle to their "progress". The following table compares da'wah with farming:

Activity	Doer	Field	Product
Farming	Farmer	Farm	Crops
Da'wah	Da'ee	Heart	Hidaya

Now, four channels lead to the heart. Depending on how these channels are used, the heart either gets corrupted with kufr, falsehood and dirt of dunya or enlightened with the light of eman & yaqin.

So here are some of the ways we can actively seek to use these channels to build the eman by settling greatness of Allah ﷻ in the heart:

Talking about the greatness of Allah: This is da'wah at its purest form and all prophets begun with this. Sounds simple - but check it out for yourself, most people cannot speak on this more than a minute or two without drifting. Yet this is such a vast topic - most of Qur'an is on this topic. So practice and sincerely ask from Allah - if Allah accepts you then Allah will use you to show others His greatness in creating, sustaining, controlling; show His treasures; His independence, His plans etc. The fact that our mouth is close to our ears and the fact that da'ee inevitability speaks many times, this talking will make the greatest impact on the da'ee.

Listening about the greatness of Allah: The next best thing is to give our ears to listen about the greatness of Allah. So the environment plays a key role. We must get out of our way to change our environment or travel to the right environment regularly for prolonged periods. The story of the man killing 99 people is an example of this.

Looking at the creations of Allah: The creations are signs of Allah, which are all around us. The presence of a house in a forest is a sign that somebody built the house. Similarly, the vast array of creations point to their creators. Just like the way a smartphone or a car points to the ingenuity and sophistication of its manufacturer, a flower, a leaf, a coconut, an eye, a womb, an ant, a galaxy points to the greatness of its creator.

Pondering over the creations of Allah: Allah ﷻ repeatedly invites people to ponder, to reflect. Allah controls the systems of the universe - some of which runs in our body; maintains water cycle, food cycle etc. How Allah elevates some and debases others. How Allah tests one group of people with another group. Realising how Allah sustains us is of extreme importance, as this is the first question we will have to answer in the grave - if we think our strength, our intelligence, our farms, our business, our food, our power, our relations etc. sustains us, which is exactly what non-Muslims belief, then we are in trouble.

To learn eman is fardh-'ain - this is the case when there is no eman or eman is so weak that it fails to bring the person to fulfil the commands of Allah ﷻ and fails to prevent from forbidden deeds. Sahaba ﷺ learnt eman before they learnt Qur'an - as narrated by Umar ﷺ. It does not mean we give up reading or ignore the commands of Qur'an until we have strong eman. What it means is that if eman is weak then one will be unable to live by the dictates of Qur'an, even if that individual has all the knowledge regarding it.

So to increase our eman we need to utilise the appropriate process for each channel. Any progress in this effort will be reflected first at the heart. The first tell-tale sign of hidaya, the changes in yaqin, which then triggers a transformation of the person, and by extension the whole community. The objective is to instil the following changes in focus and yaqin:

- From creation to Creator
- From asbabs to a'mals
- From dunya (temporary) to akhira (everlasting)
- From human observation (*najar*) to revelation (*khabar*).

When a person talks in contrary to Allah, listens, ponders 24 hours of a day (eg. last year I got this from that effort, I shall do this, that,…), then every statement is reducing his eman. But every positive statement such as "success in obedience to Allah", "Allah blessed me with this", "Allah facilitated this", will increase his yaqin.

All the wrong statements are hitting the eman like a wrecking ball striking a building until it's destroyed completely. Eman will become corrupted in such an environment. This is why sitting with materially oriented people is considered an illness in itself. Sitting in the circle of eman is in itself a cure. A'isha ﷺ asked her nephew to sit with poor, it would benefit him.

As complete hidaya involves correct a'mal and correct a'mal is impossible without sunnah, so da'wah of the sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ is essential. Da'wah of Sunnah is to realise that:

- Existence of universe is not valuable, but the existence of Rasulullah ﷺ is valuable.
- Products which comes out of this world are not valuable, but the a'mals that come out from the body of Rasulullah ﷺ is valuable.
- A'mals of this world are not valuable, but the a'mals of Rasulullah ﷺ are valuable.
- The success of both worlds is not based on things of this world but on adapting Sunnah.

People do not practice deen because the benefits of deen are hidden from them. On the contrary, the benefits of dunya are in front of everyone - no one needs to explain that behind every single seed there is a plant and hundreds and millions of seeds. Hence practising on the promises of dunya, however flawed, is easy and practising on deen is difficult. It requires effort on one's heart to develop firm believe that what we see with our eyes and what we hear with our ears and our thoughts, observations and experiences might be deceiving us but the divine guidance in the Qur'an or what is spoken from the tongue of Rasulullah ﷺ can never be wrong.

For example, one dealing with interest sees the benefit very clearly, even though it is the most impure or dirtiest of rizks. He sees the apparent benefit but the punishment is hidden from him. In contrast, in giving sadaqa, we negate what our intellect tells us and believe and act on what Rasulullah ﷺ said [4]:

> *Charity does not decrease wealth, no one forgives another except that Allah increases his honour, and no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises his status.*

Due to sadaqa or zakat, one will witness apparent reduction in wealth - that is so because the benefit is hidden but the loss is clear. Payment of zakat purifies and guards the wealth. Fish only see food in the hook. Greed or apparent benefit takes it to the hook. It does not see its destruction.

When the effort of da'wah takes place, then at first eman is built in the heart of the people, Islam then directs their worship by purifying their intention and deeds. It then affects their social dealings and interactions. This way

sahaba ﷺ took Islam to affect their social dealings and market places. Once Umar ﷺ noticed a new trader in the market, he directed him to learn the rules of business before trading in the market of Madinah.

This process reverses when the effort of da'wah is absent, even if you have the most pious community. Corruption begins at the heart as yaqin falters and aqeedah is distorted, deen begins to leave from monetary dealings and social interaction becomes corrupt, sunnah is discarded. Eventually, even their worship becomes corrupt. Thus today we see people bring their corrupt attitudes of the market place into masjids and Islamic institutions.

Maulana Ilyas ﷺ said:

> The correct order of priority in our effort is that the work of heart should be kept in the first place (that is, while praying to Allah and keeping our firm faith in Him and His help, returning and conversing to Him in all deeds, asking everything from Him in every hour of need and cutting our hopes and expectations off from all avenues of material help); the bodily work should be in the second place (that is, going here and there and working hard in spreading the things of Allah's pleasure); and in the third-place should the work of tongue be kept…

… ★ …

Men of Da'wah: Selfless, Single-Minded & Relentless

The qualities that a da'ee needs, for obvious reason, are the qualities that prophets had, the more matching the better. Many of these qualities are taught, prophets were put through tests, many of the prophets were shepherds, their eman was always increasing as they saw more and more signs of Allah ﷻ.

Ibrahim عليه السلام wanted to see how Allah ﷻ gives life to the dead. Musa عليه السلام learnt to see asbabs in a totally different way in the story of his stick turning into a snake and vice-versa. Allah ﷻ narrated many stories in the Qur'an to strengthen Rasulullah ﷺ and the sahaba رضي الله عنهم. Prophets of course had miracles and direct help which also strengthened them and their followers.

Among the qualities a da'ee should posses are:

- Expect nothing worldly in return.
- Humility, make oneself small.
- Have mercy, love, forgiveness for the entire creations.
- Work in stages and not affected by results.
- Relentless, uses every opportunity. Never takes a holiday like the Sun.

Developing the above noble qualities is a must for a da'ee for him to be steadfast and successful. Allah guides him first who makes effort to connect Allah to his slaves, and then chooses him to guide others.

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ:

> To make effort in Europe & America and such materialistic countries, the workers needed to be slaves of Allah with a level of yaqin that they do not stretch their tongues out for the bling-bling and worldly attractive life and social systems. Instead, they should shed tears upon seeing the systems of life contrary to Islam and the amali life brought by Rasulullah ﷺ.

Wisdom of Opposition to Da'wah

Every da'wah which calls to the truth will definitely face opposition and obstacles. People will argue against it and put doubt in it. Allah ﷻ informs us about it:

يَا حَسْرَةً عَلَى الْعِبَادِ ۚ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ۞

> Alas for mankind! There never came a messenger to them but they used to mock at him. [36:30]

The trials and afflictions is by design, it serves a very important purpose among others, that is to purify the community of imposters.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا مِنَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًا وَنَصِيرًا ۞

> Thus have We made for every Prophet an enemy among the Mujrimun (disbelievers, polytheists, criminals, etc.). But Sufficient is your Lord as a Guide and Helper. [25:31]

مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ ۗ

> Allah will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He separates the wicked from the good. [3:179]

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّىٰ نَعْلَمَ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَنَبْلُوَ أَخْبَارَكُمْ ۞

> And We will surely test you until We make evident those who strive [for the cause of Allah] and the patient, and We will test your affairs. [47:31]

There is absolutely no doubt that Allah's knowledge precedes the occurrence of all events. In this ayat, "حَتَّىٰ نَعْلَمَ" means 'until We know of its occurrence.' This is why Ibn 'Abbas ﷺ said in regard to this and similar texts, "حَتَّىٰ نَعْلَمَ", means, "so that We may see [2]."

Opposition to da'wah cannot harm deen as Allah ﷻ destroys their effort:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَشَاقُّوا الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيُحْبِطُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۞

> Verily, those who disbelieve, and hinder (men) from the path of Allah, and oppose the Messenger, after the guidance has been clearly shown to them, they will not hurt Allah in the least, but He will make their deeds fruitless. [47:32]

Patience & Steadfastness

When trials come, the da'ee must be steadfast. The da'ee should bear patiently any harm as Allah is with the patient:

لَتُبْلَوُنَّ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا ۚ وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ۞

> You will certainly be tried in your property and in your persons, and you will certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the scripture before you and from those who ascribe partners to Allah; but if you persevere patiently, and become muttaqis then verily, that will be a determining factor in all affairs. [3:186]

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ آثِمًا أَوْ كَفُورًا ۞

> Therefore be patient with constancy to the command of your Lord, and obey neither a sinner nor a disbeliever. [76:24]

A da'ee is never discouraged by weak or negative response or encouraged by a strong response. So keep the purpose in front. We are not responsible for results, we are responsible for making effort. Even Rasulullah ﷺ could not give hidaya to his beloved uncle. We will give da'wah and we will not be hopeless of anyone because all hearts are in control of the Lord.

Maulana Yusuf Khandlawi ﷺ said:

> Take time out from your time of earning. An ill person taken to the hospital, cannot earn or stay at home. So, when in the path of Allah, earnings will lessen, have patience. A patient doesn't take to anger etc., he adopts patience even at less income.

Not Affected by Circumstances

In general, the environment affects everyone - no one can resist it. Can a doctor say, "I am not going to feel the heat (weather)"? He can't avoid it. Similarly, if the environment is of deen then no one will be able to resist the positive effects.

It is not blameworthy to be affected by the condition. Even prophets and sahaba ﷺ were also affected by conditions. However, the difference between them and others is that others get affected so much by the conditions that they break the commands of Allah whereas the prophets & sahaba ﷺ did not let their fear break the commands of Allah, rather they were ready to sacrifice upon the promises of Allah. Because of this Allah's help was with them.

Allah ﷻ inform us about Musa ﷺ:

قَالَا رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا نَخَافُ أَنْ يَفْرُطَ عَلَيْنَا أَوْ أَنْ يَطْغَىٰ ۞

> They said, "Our Lord, indeed we are afraid that he will hasten [punishment] against us or that he will transgress." [20:45]

So Allah consoled him:

قَالَ لَا تَخَافَا ۖ إِنَّنِي مَعَكُمَا أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَىٰ ۞

> He (Allah) said: "Fear not, verily! I am with you both, hearing and seeing…" [20:46]

Musa ﷺ thus overcame their fear and fulfilled the commands of Allah. In the Qur'an we also find that Nooh ﷺ gave da'wah in all possible conditions: day and night, alone and in groups, openly and covertly, at home and outside etc. Allah ﷻ asked Nooh ﷺ to do da'wah and then to make du'a.

People of Musa ﷺ became nervous when they met the red sea. Musa ﷺ said, "Allah is with us." Another time they said to Musa ﷺ, "You and your lord fight…" Thus his people became affected by the environment.

Rasulullah ﷺ would take every opportunity to give da'wah. During his hijrah from Makkah as a fugitive, his guide gave him the option to take a safe route which was long or an alternative route which was shorter and easier but has two highway robbers. Rasulullah ﷺ chose the route with the robbers, he gave them da'wah and they became Muslims.

Sahaba ﷺ made da'wah effort under the guidance of Rasulullah ﷺ. They were active in da'wah long before the commands of salat, zakat etc. Sahaba ﷺ were sent out in small groups or in groups of forty or more, and sometimes alone. They were ready for sacrifice, often risking their lives.

When Rasulullah ﷺ passed away many sahaba ﷺ took effect from the prevailing condition and suggested halting the army of Usama ﷺ. However, it did not prevent them from following the decision of khalifa Abu Bak ﷺ.

Seeking Only the Pleasure of Allah

Whatever effort is made, in our own home town, village or further afield, it must entail intention to spend our time and wealth on da'wah, talim, worship and in building qualities. This we do only so that Allah become pleased with us. Further, we want this manner of pleasing Allah ﷻ by spending both health and wealth to become normal in the ummah [16].

We must make the utmost effort to save ourselves from such evil and destructive faults as desires for respect, fame, showing off, greed, etc. Even if someone invites us for food, then we should not have greed for that, rather the aim behind the acceptance of this invitation should be to further deen.

Da'wah is not for gaining rewards, wealth or power - but those things are to be sacrificed for da'wah! None of the prophets would tolerate a compromise or decline in da'wah for any of their personal needs. The smallest loss due to abuse of this effort is that the person will be cut off from this effort. We want rewards only from Allah ﷻ and after death.

Sahaba ﷺ used to worry when wealth was coming to Madinah. It is said that, when Islam spread and the Muslims conquered all the surrounding territory, Khabbab bin Alarat ﷺ used to weep and say: "Allah seems to he compensating us in this world for all our sufferings, and perhaps nothing would be left for us as rewards in akhira." Umar ﷺ used to say that if there was any good in these then Allah ﷻ would have given it to his predecessors.

Rasulullah ﷺ said that all forms of discrimination, colour, race, territorialism, tribalism etc. must be crushed. Da'wah will die if nationalism etc. comes in the way. We do not have the right to use our capacity, wealth, time anyway we like. It should be utilised according to the need of ummah. Each and every daily activity should show that we are believers.

Concern for Others Matched by Tolerance & Forbearance

The da'ee is gentle with people. They consider themselves to be a helper in transition. Da'wah should be with gentle admonition. When Musa ﷺ went to Pharaoh, he was advised thus:

فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَىٰ ۞

And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may heed or fear. [20:44]

Allah ﷻ enjoined gentleness towards believers:

وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۞

And lower your wings for the believers. [15:88]

And by the mercy of Allah, Rasulullah ﷺ was gentle with his sahaba ﷺ:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ ۖ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ۞

So by mercy from Allah, you were lenient with them. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask forgiveness for them; and consult them in the matter. And when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him). [3:159]

Fikr or worry & concern for own rectification as well as the wider humanity is essential for da'ee. This will keep the work going - it's not knowledge, materials or status. Darkness cannot cause any harm to the light. Actual problem is the weakness of eman which is inside.

It has also been narrated by Sa'd ibn Abu Burda through his father through his grandfather that Rasulullah ﷺ sent him and Mu'adh (on a mission) to the Yemen, and advised them:

> *Show leniency; don't be hard upon them; give them glad tidings (of Divine favours in this world and the hereafter); and do not create aversion. Work in collaboration and don't be divided [4].*

Later on Rasulullah ﷺ sent Abu Musa Ashari ﷺ to assist them [63].

Da'wah to Allah ﷻ Purpose of This Ummah, Mark of its Distinction

This ummah has been taken out for the benefit of mankind. If dunya was our purpose (*maqsad*), then what is the difference between us and the non-Muslim?

This ummah is not ordinary, not created to work in factories etc. This is the best ummah, to be a well-wisher of the whole of mankind, to work on people's heart, so that people become real people. To this, we bring two things in our own life:

Life of Rasulullah ﷺ - Sahaba ﷺ used to say "Be like us" because they were samples of Rasulullah ﷺ 's life.

Effort of Rasulullah ﷺ - Sahaba ﷺ became Muslims through da'wah, they learnt to do da'wah first. Rasulullah ﷺ taught sahaba da'wah first, then salat and other ibadah.

Our existence must be for the betterment of the entire humanity:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ۗ

You are the best ummah ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin good and forbid evil, and you believe in Allah. [3:110]

Allah ﷻ in this ayat declared the esteemed status this ummah holds above all the previous nations by enjoining good and forbidding evil. This is the most righteous and beneficial nation ever raised for mankind. Ibn 'Abbas ﷺ and others all explained that "You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind" means, "…the best of peoples for the people" [2].

Rasulullah ﷺ said [8, 5, 7]:

> *You are the final of seventy nations, you are the best and most honoured among them to Allah.*

However, only those from this ummah who have the qualities of enjoining good and forbidding evil will share this praise. Qatadah ﷺ said [2]:

> We were told that 'Umar ibn al-Khattab recited this ayat during a hajj that he performed, when he saw that the people were rushing. He then said, "Whoever likes to be among this [praised] ummah, let him fulfil the condition that Allah set in this ayat."

Sahaba ﷺ understood the purpose of this ummah and so they made their graves hundreds and thousands of miles away from their place of birth. Within few years sahaba ﷺ were all over the world, Yemen, Sham, Persia and even China. They could have chosen to stay in Makkah and Madinah where rewards are multiplied thousands of times, but purpose takes priority. They were ready to leave their home for the sake of deen at any time, whether alone or in groups.

Sahaba ﷺ knew saving one's life is not success but in giving life for the sake of Allah ﷻ is success. Thus they risked their lives for the sake of da'wah. The incident of Bi'r-Ma'una is just one example of their dedication for da'wah [64].

Whatever is customary is loved by everyone. At sahaba's time, it was customary to give life. Today it's customary to stay home and live a life of luxury. Rasulullah ﷺ nurtured his sahaba ﷺ so that they could continue da'wah in all adversity and whatever the condition of the people.

Allah ﷻ has fixed parameters of success. There is no change in the sunnah of Allah ﷻ. Da'wah is to attach certain a'mals in our lives - visiting, talim, khuruz etc. Da'wah is the root a'mal, it's not just for sawab, it's a duty in itself on this ummah. Thus, we must make a firm decision: I will not waste my time. The person who is not doing the effort of deen is not doing what he is responsible for, he is a loser, ummah has lost him.

Narrated by Ammar bin Yasir ﷺ:

> Rasulullah ﷺ once sent me to a clan belonging to the Qais tribe to teach them the Shari'ah of Islam. However, I found them to be like wild camels, with their gazes always aspiring for more and with no other interests besides their goats and camels.
> I therefore returned to Rasulullah ﷺ, who asked, *'O Ammar! What happened?'* When I related to Rasulullah ﷺ what the people were like and how indifferent they were, Rasulullah ﷺ said:
>
> *O Ammar! Should I not inform you of people even stranger than these? They are people who know what these people are ignorant of and are still indifferent towards it as these people are* [65].

Every individual is responsible for the whole ummah and the whole ummah is responsible for every individual. It's not obligatory that you spend every day and all of your life working. Sahaba ﷺ also worked, but not all the time. When we meet shopkeeper etc., we explain to them that the noblest and the best work is where Rasulullah ﷺ exerted his effort in.

If we do not refrain from lowly mentality, if we fail to make da'wah our work, then there is a severe warning:

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ

> Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, and the dwellings in which you delight are dearer to you than Allah and His messenger, and striving hard and fighting in His Cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision (torment). [9:24]

وَإِنْ تَتَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَالَكُمْ ۞

> …And if you turn away, He will exchange you for some other people, and they will not be likes of you. [47:38]

Allah ﷻ created us to have His love in our hearts. Sahaba ﷺ sacrificed so much that the love of Allah ﷻ moulded their life. Hence any shortcoming in deen would make them unhappy. Material well-being was of secondary importance to them.

We must take stock of ourselves. as Muslims hold key to peace and salvation. So we must find our way first before we help others. Anyone who does not understand this may become an obstacle. Asma' bint Yazeed ﷺ questioned Rasulullah ﷺ [66]:

> O Rasulullah, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you. I have come to you on behalf of the women. Verily Allah has sent you to men and women. We have believed in you. We do not go out and we stay at home. We are their source of physical pleasure. We carry their children. A man goes out to pray jum'ah and jama'ah, and follows the janazah. And if they go out for hajj, or 'umrah, or jihad, we look after their wealth. We wash their clothing. We raise their children. Shall we not share in the reward?

Rasulullah ﷺ turned to his sahaba ﷺ and said, "*Have you ever heard anything a woman has said better than what she has said?*" Then he ﷺ said to her:

> *Understand O woman, and inform the other women.*
> *Indeed a woman's perfection of her relationship with her husband, her seeking his pleasure, and doing that which he approves of is equivalent to all of that.*

Asma ﷺ left exclaiming ﴿لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللهُ﴾.

Family support makes da'wah easy. Allah brought Musa ﷺ from his family and belongings (sheep etc.) to Tur in order to give the work of da'wah. Hajira ﷺ supported Ibrahim ﷺ in passing all the tests and hidaya spread. On the contrary wife of Shuaib ﷺ did not support him and hidaya did not spread much in his community. Khadijah ﷺ spent everything for sake of da'wah. A'isha, Umm Salama ﷺ used to go out with Rasulullah ﷺ. Usman ﷺ received da'wah from his aunt. However, in general, women give da'wah amongst women. Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said:

> If our wives, children sacrifice like Hajera and Ismael, Allah ﷻ will open direct help from His Qudhra. Allah ﷻ made Ibrahim ﷺ the imam of the monotheists. Allah ﷻ's help is with those who are making practical sacrifices for the deen, not nice bayans, etc. He loves each and every word and action of the one who is trying to save people from the wrath of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ take him close to Him. Allah ﷻ will give the taste of the love of Allah ﷻ to him.

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Da'wah to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى It's Everyone's Issue, Not Just for Ulama

Da'wah is everybody's responsibility. There is no pre-requisite to giving da'wah. Da'wah, the representative work of Muhammad ﷺ, is the work of all those who follow him till Qiyamah.

قُلْ هَٰذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي ۖ وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ❊

Say, "This is my way; I invite to Allah with insight, I and those who follow me. And exalted is Allah; and I am not one of the polytheists." [12:108]

In the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ praised an ordinary Muslim who came to support a group of prophets who were doing da'wah in a distant city:

إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ اثْنَيْنِ فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَعَزَّزْنَا بِثَالِثٍ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا إِلَيْكُمْ مُرْسَلُونَ ❊

When We sent to them two messengers, they belied them both, so We reinforced them with a third, and they said: "Verily! We have been sent to you as messengers." [36:14]

وَجَاءَ مِنْ أَقْصَى الْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَىٰ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اتَّبِعُوا الْمُرْسَلِينَ ❊ اتَّبِعُوا مَنْ لَا يَسْأَلُكُمْ أَجْرًا وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ❊ وَمَا لِيَ لَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ❊

> And there came running from the farthest part of the town, a man, saying: "O my people! Obey the messengers; Follow those who do not ask of you [any] payment, and they are [rightly] guided. And why should I not worship He who created me and to whom you will be returned? … [36:20-2]

Eventually, the rebellious people of the town killed the man but Allah ﷻ honoured him with Jannah in return. This praise is for a person on whom da'wah was not obligatory, so what about us when da'wah is obligatory?

قِيلَ ادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ ۖ قَالَ يَا لَيْتَ قَوْمِي يَعْلَمُونَ ۞ بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ ۞

> It was said, "Enter Paradise." He said, "I wish my people could know. Of how my Lord has forgiven me and placed me among the honoured." [36:26-7]

Every part of the body is important and needed, eg. hair in the nose, eyelids. Exactly the same way every person in ummah is important. Everyone must be giving da'wah so that their eman improves, thus contributing well to this ummah of one body. The one who loves this ummah will be given the ability to do this work properly. This da'wah factory is the Lord's factory. If you don't work properly then you will be made redundant.

This ummah is better so long as it does da'wah. Da'wah is mentioned before eman in the verse:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ۗ

> You are the best community ever raised up for mankind; You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and you believe in Allah. [3:110]

Allah ﷻ further said:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ ۞

> And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, … [3:104]

The objective of this ayat is that there should be a segment of this Muslim Ummah fulfilling this task, even though it is also an obligation on every member of this ummah, each according to his ability [2].

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Whoever among you witnesses an evil, let him change it with his hand. If he is unable, then let him change it with his tongue. If he is unable, then let him change it with his heart, and this is the weakest faith.*

In another narration he ﷺ said: *There is no faith beyond that, not even the weight of a mustard seed [4].*

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *Convey to the people even if it were a single sentence, and tell others the stories of Bani Israel (which have been taught to you), for it is not sinful to do so. And whoever tells a lie on me intentionally, will surely take his place in the hellfire [3].*

Al-Haafiz ibn Hajar ﷺ said in Fath al-Baari: He said in the hadith, "*even if it is one verse*" so that everyone who heard him would hasten to convey whatever he heard of the verses, even if it was very little, so that in this manner everything that he ﷺ brought would be conveyed.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen ﷺ said:

> If a person understands what he is calling people to, it makes no difference whether he is a great and prominent scholar or a seeker of knowledge who is serious in his pursuit thereof, or a regular person who has certain knowledge of the issue in question. Rasulullah ﷺ said: "*Convey from me, even if it is one verse,*" and he did not stipulate that the da'ee should have reached a high level of knowledge, but it is essential that he should have knowledge of that to which he is calling people. But calling out of ignorance or calling based on emotion is not permissible [67].

Every ummati must recognise and feel the responsibility of the da'wah for the whole world. Our fault is that we have not realised this reality. Other nations are busy with business, trade, with ambitions of the world and materials etc. We were sent as da'ee and with the power of du'a. To relief us of the worldly problems, there is no way except through da'wah and du'a. Allah ﷻ always destroyed falsehood with da'wah or after da'wah, not with means and materials.

This ummah has been chosen to do work of Rasulullah ﷺ. Sahaba ﷺ understood this, they started spending time and money for this work. The first thing they got in this effort is the reality of eman. The importance of this work is further underlined by many other hadiths. There is no room for one to be only satisfied with their own piety.

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *By He in Whose Hand is my soul! You will enjoin righteousness and forbid evil, or Allah shall send down a punishment from Him to you. Then, you will supplicate to Him, but He will not accept your supplication [8].*

A'isha ﷺ says [7, 11]:

> Once Rasulullah ﷺ entered the house and I guessed from his face that something of great importance had happened to him. He did not talk to anyone, and after making wudhu he entered the mosque. I stood behind the wall to hear what he said. He sat at the pulpit and after praising Allah, he said:
>
> *0 Muslims! Allah has commanded you to call people to good deeds, and prevent them from committing sins; otherwise a time will come when you will pray to Him, but He will not listen to you; you will ask your needs of Him, but He will not grant them; you will demand His help against your enemies, but He will not help you.*"
>
> After saying this, he came down from the pulpit.

Rasulullah ﷺ warned about wrongdoers:

> *There are not a people among whom acts of disobedience take place and they are able to change them but they do not change them except that Allah will soon include them all in a punishment from Himself*[68].
>
> *You people must all command people to do good, restrain them from evil otherwise Allah will cause such a tyrant to rule over you who will not respect your elders and will not have mercy on your youngsters. Then you people will pray to Him but will not answer to your prayers, you will ask Him for help but will not help you, you will seek His pardon but will not pardon you* [69].

Mission - Everything that belongs to us may go down but not kalima. We are not for dunya - only for the work of Rasulullah ﷺ. Everybody including beggars, women, children, kings all are deputies of Rasulullah ﷺ. This was the motto of the men, women and children of sahaba ﷺ. We must beg Allah to accept us. We should discuss what Allah has done, is doing and will do in future.

Rasulullah ﷺ did so much effort on each and everyone who received kalima until they became his companion, a helper in the effort of propagation of deen. The first command after kalima is to call people to Allah (in Makkah). For this, each and everything including life is to be sacrificed.

When we change our intention of life to the propagation of deen, being a deputy of Rasulullah ﷺ then Allah ﷻ shall be with us directly. Changing the condition is not in the hands of anybody in the world. All control belong to Allah. So if someone does da'wah then Allah will take care of anything that comes against this da'ee or effort. Sahaba ﷺ are a clear example of this.

Once Maulana Ilyas ؒ went to a bed-ridden ill person. He told him, "I know you are sick, but you know the state of the people in your locality, at least you can call them here."

Today we are chained with our status. We must free ourselves. We must realise and propagate that we are the deputies of Rasulullah ﷺ and inculcate this fikr in others by talking about this responsibility. We start this with tawbah, then Allah will be pleased with us.

Abu Bakr ؓ said, "Anything in deen is lacking and I am alive, it's impossible." He would work one day to do da'wah for six days. The men making his life comfortable, increasing businesses while deen is dying but says the kalima - Allah replies such is a liar. Rasulullah ﷺ neither stopped sahaba ﷺ from working completely nor let them engage fully in work.

Ulama say that not giving da'wah because of not practising is just like saying, "Because I don't pray salat, I will also not fast." This has two sins together, otherwise, it would only be one sin. Same with not giving da'wah and not practising.

We should appreciate people's strengths as no one is free of weaknesses and shortcomings. Even if you consider somebody to be a wali, you will still find in him weaknesses which generate hate. Contempt, mockery, fault finding, back-biting and complaining are sources of disagreements and dis-

unity and thus forbidden. Further, if we want everybody to participate in this noble work, young and old, men and women, literate and illiterate, rich and poor, etc. then we must only look at their strengths.

Sahaba ﷺ moulded their life with Qur'an and Sunnah. That's why they could easily say to people, "Be like Us." We can do the same only if our life is made that impressive.

Rasulullah ﷺ urged the delegates of Abdul Qais to memorise the faith and the knowledge and to convey the same to those left behind. Narrated by Abu Sulaiman and Malik bin Huwairith [3]:

> We were a few young men of similar age and stayed with Rasulullah ﷺ for twenty nights. Then he thought that we were anxious for our families, and he asked us whom we had left behind to look after our families, and we told him. He was kind-hearted and merciful, so he said:
>
> *Return to your families and teach them and order them (to do good a'mals) and offer your prayers in the way you saw me offering my prayers, and when the stated time for the prayer becomes due, then one of you should pronounce its call, and the eldest of you should lead you in prayer.*

One day Rasulullah ﷺ praised certain Muslim tribes and then warned other tribes of imminent punishment from him "*who neither inculcate an understanding of deen in their neighbours, nor forbid them from evil. And what has happened to certain tribes who neither acquire knowledge from their neighbours, nor attain an understanding of deen, nor accept advice….*" Following this warning the tribe of al-Ash'ari, who were known to have knowledge of deen, sought one year for this work [70].

When ordinary people become the ambassadors of Islam, then they will change their own lifestyles. So the truth of Islamic lifestyle need to be learnt and explained, and at the same time change their own lifestyle according to that, this will cause Islam to proliferate [16].

Rasulullah ﷺ is the last prophet and the universal prophet - for all jinns and humans until the hour. That's why he not only did da'wah to establish deen but he made effort to prepare a generation who will carry this message. He tried to instil in them the priority of being in the path of Allah over other acts of devotion.

Narrated by Ibn 'Abbas ﷺ [5]:

> Rasulullah ﷺ deputed 'Abdullah ibn Rawaha ﷺ on an expedition and that was on Friday. His companions set out in the morning, but he decided to stay back and offer salat with Rasulullah ﷺ, and join them later. When he offered salat with Rasulullah ﷺ, he was noticed by Rasulullah ﷺ.
>
> He enquired: *What prevented you from going out in the morning with your companions?*
> He replied: I intended to offer Salat-ul-Jumu'ah with you and then join them.
> Rasulullah ﷺ said: *Even if you spend whatever is in the world, you will not be able to achieve the reward of those who left in the morning.*

Abu Hurairah ﷺ relates [5]:

> A sahabi once passed by a mountain pass in which a spring of sweet water was flowing. The sahabi was extremely pleased with this scenery and he said: How wonderful it would be to abandon everything else and stay in this beautiful environment. Somehow Rasulullah ﷺ learnt of his statement whereupon he told the sahaba:
>
> *Do not ever do this because setting out from home in order to elevate the deen of Allah Ta'ala entails greater reward than performing seventy years of salat at home.*

Uthman ﷺ relates that Rasulullah ﷺ said [5, 9]:

> *Patrolling for a single day in the path of Allah is more superior than a thousand days of worship at home.*

Being part of this effort depends on acceptance and not on qualification. And the true sign of acceptance is that our day and night resembles effort of Rasulullah ﷺ.

Spend Health, Wealth & Time in Four Channels: Carnal Needs, Angelic Worship, Vicegerent Care & Prophetic Effort

Every man and woman is given three great strengths: health, wealth and ability to make effort. And they are given the freedom to spend these blessings the way they want. That choice basically follows effort on two distinct patterns:

On Materials: Whatever progress we are seeing, virtually all of that shows its results on food, medicine, houses, cars, business, communication, sports & entertainment, factory and in office, in short - on materials.

On Human: The methodology of the effort pursued by every single prophet showed its impact on the man himself - it was on their tongues, ears, eyes and most importantly on the hearts. The result was the progress of the souls which pleased Allah, the souls which made effort on a'mals and solved their problems through Allah.

By making effort Pharaoh mustered his army and all other asbabs of his time. This same effort is happening in today's world, the only difference now is that this is made in an accelerated rate, involving as many members of the family as possible. So in one side asbabs improved but near-universal neglect of the souls has made a world comprising people who are lonely, stressed, worked up, angry, depressed and detached from their creator and sustainer, just as we have been warned:

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا

> And whoever turns away from My remembrance – indeed, he will have a wretched life… [20:124]

The thing on which people exert their effort - applying both their hearts and intellects - that thing becomes valuable. Thus soil becomes valuable as it turns into bricks, ceramics, plastics, metals and alloys etc.; wood turns into furniture, metals fly in the sky and so on. Yet today invented things have become weapons against them. On the contrary, if they put effort on themselves as Allah ﷻ wishes, every creation will benefit him. If they were to direct this effort for themselves they would be worthy of Jannah.

The two commodities: health and time are such that without them we cannot do anything. These are such that no one can buy them and no one can donate them. Both of these are given free by Allah ﷻ and controlled by Him. It's false to say we see by the eye etc. rather it's the soul that uses the eyes to see. Then who has given the soul?

After death people will realise how useless their efforts on worldly things have been. So make effort on each organ of the body to such an extent that with a blink of an eye you can earn a Jannah that is million times more valuable than this world. For example, if one's sight falls on a non-mahram woman but their heart turns the eyes to a different direction by the fear of Allah, he will be blessed with a Jannah.

So how should Muslims spend their time and effort to maximise their rank? By the mercy of Allah ﷻ any Muslim can target to become the best Muslim, they can be da'ee, they can become wali of Allah ﷻ. There is no prerequisite to this journey. This is an amazing realisation - because it throws all the people of the world on the same level playing field. From the kings to pauper, young or old, men or women, rich or poor, farmer or trader, literate or illiterate etc., none of them is hindered by their background! They all have the

opportunity to pursue a life to be in the company of the prophets, siddiqins and shuhada forever.

Ulama explain how any Muslim can deploy their efforts in four distinct and increasing meritorious ways to attain everlasting rewards and higher ranks in the sight of Allah ﷻ:

Carnal Needs: These a'mals stem from human desires and needs, but Allah has certain commands and specified method concerning them. When such a'mals are performed according to the commands of Allah, man is raised above base animal state, the a'mals become a'mal of deen. For example, eating, sleeping, wedding, feeding wife and children, wearing garments, showing mercy, shopping, farming, working in factories, or as a daily labourer. Here the sphere of effort is own-self.

Angelic Worship: There are a'mals which show the servitude of the slave in the court of Allah ﷻ and show worship of Him. By doing these a'mals of worship one attains pleasure and nearness to Allah. Salat, fasting, hajj, sacrifice, dhikr, and Qur'an recitation are examples of this type of a'mal. These a'mals raises the person above the angelic state. Here the sphere of effort is own-self too.

Vicegerent Care: In performing these a'mals one acts as a vicegerent of Allah ﷻ. For example enjoining kindness, ihsan, feeding the hungry, caring for refugees & orphans, be just and establish justice, forgiving, covering faults, punish the guilty. These qualities and attributes actually belong to Allah and these are His prerogative. Believers are ordered to perform these according to their status and ensure humanity is benefited. Here the person is benefiting others materially.

Prophetic Effort: These are a'mals, which are obliged upon prophets, their followers can do them as their deputies. For example, da'wah, tabligh, talim, tarbiyat, enjoining good and forbidding evil; striving and sacrificing in His path, raising the word of Allah etc. Prophets were sent only to do these a'mals. The result is that people get hidaya, they realise their purpose, they come on to a'mal - as a consequence people's akhira is made unlike the previous three kinds of efforts.

For any a'mal to become deeni it needs to meet certain conditions such as eman, sincerity and according to Sunnah. One also needs to ensure that the a'mals are not performed at the expanse of other a'mals of higher priority

and importance. For example, if somebody becomes so busy with his work, wife and children that he cannot find time to learn the knowledge of deen, to strengthen eman and yaqin, developing the reality of salat, and relationship with Allah, then his looking after the wife and children and busying with the work will never become deeni a'mal, rather it will be punishment and a fitna. It is manifesting

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ ۚ

Your wealth and your children are only a trial… [64:15]

Rasulullah ﷺ said [5]:

> *You live in such a time that if any of you abandon even a tenth of what you are enjoined, you will be ruined. But a time will come when, if a person fulfills only a tenth of what is enjoined, they will be saved.*

Helping the deen is a way to get close to Allah. Khadija ؓ, who supported the effort of Rasulullah ﷺ with all her wealth and energy had the honour of hearing Allah's pleasure in this earthly life! Narrated by Abu Hurayra ؓ:

> Jibrael ؑ came to Rasulullah ﷺ and said, "O Rasulullah! This is Khadija coming to you with a dish having meat soup (or some food or drink). When she reaches you, greet her on behalf of her Lord and on my behalf, and give her the glad tidings of having a Qasab palace in Jannah wherein there will be neither any noise nor any fatigue (trouble) [3]."

Al-Hasan al-Basri ؒ who recited the ayat:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ۞

> And who is better in speech than he who invites to Allah, and does righteous deeds, and says: "I am one of the Muslims." [41:33]

and said, "This is the beloved of Allah, this is the close friend of Allah, this is the chosen one of Allah, this is the most beloved of the all the people of earth to Allah. He responded to the call of Allah and called mankind to that to which he had responded. He did righteous deeds in response and said, 'I am one of the Muslims.' This is Allah's vicegerent [2]."

… ★ …

Have Good Expectation of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى - With Good Deeds He Will Bring Good Conditions

Three days before departing Rasulullah ﷺ said [4, 7]:

> *None of you should die without having good expectations in Allah.*

Allah ﷻ enjoins a balanced view, between fear and hope:

فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ۞

> None feels secure from the Plan of Allah except the people who are the losers. [7:99]

إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْأَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ۞

> Certainly no one despairs of Allah's mercy, except the people who disbelieve. [12:87]

Shaitan wants to disappoint the Muslim - that disbelievers have everything - you're doing effort but no benefit - leave it. Shaitan creates a feeling of deprivation - or even to take him to evil [71]. Instead give glad tidings, entertain good expectation of Allah, do good deeds, Allah will bring good condition for you.

Allah Almighty says about the righteous slaves:

إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُمْ بِاللَّهِ الْغَرُورُ ۞

> Verily, the Promise of Allah is true, let not then this (worldly) present life deceive you, nor let the chief deceiver (Satan) deceive you about Allah. [31:33]

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَحْسَنَ الَّذِي كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۞

> And those who believe and do righteous deeds – We will surely remit from them their evil deeds and will surely reward them according to the best of what they used to do. [29:7]

وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ۞ فَوَقَاهُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِ مَا مَكَرُوا ۖ وَحَاقَ بِآلِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ ۞

> "…And I entrust my affair to Allah. Verily, Allah is the All-Seer of (His) slaves." So Allah saved him from the evils they plotted, while an evil torment encompassed Pharaoh's people. [40:44-5]

Rasulullah ﷺ said in a hadith qudsi:

> *Allah says: I am just as My slave thinks I am, (i.e., I am Able to do for him what he thinks I can do for him) and I am with him if he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in himself, I too, remember him in Myself; and if he remembers Me in a group of people, I remember him in a group that is better than them; and if he comes one span nearer to Me, I go one cubit nearer to him; and if he comes one cubit nearer to Me, I go a distance of two outstretched arms nearer to him; and if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running [3].*

Allah ﷻ informed us about the good expectations that the people of the cave had about Him concerning their provision, dwelling, etc. in the Qur'an:

وَإِذِ اعْتَزَلْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَأْوُوا إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُم مِّن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيُهَيِّئْ لَكُم مِّنْ أَمْرِكُم مِّرْفَقًا ۞

> (The young men said to one another): "And when you withdraw from them, and that which they worship, except Allah, then seek refuge in the Cave, your Lord will open a way for you from His Mercy and will make easy for you your affair." [18:16]

Allah ﷻ is the doer of everything. Have good expectation of Him. He established Children of Israel and relieved them from the slavery of Pharaoh. Allah ﷻ established sahaba ﷺ. He blessed them with security after their persecution in Makkah when they proved firm in their faith.

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۞

Allah has promised those who have believed among you and done righteous good deeds that He will certainly grant them succession [to present rulers] in the earth… [24:55]

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا ۖ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ

And We made from among them leaders guiding by Our command when they were patient and [when] they were certain of Our signs. [32:24]

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۞

And those who strive for Us – We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good. [29:69]

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ۞ يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَرِضْوَانٍ وَجَنَّاتٍ لَهُمْ فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ مُقِيمٌ ۞

Those who believed and emigrated and strove hard and fought in Allah's Cause with their wealth and their lives are far higher in degree with Allah. They are the successful. Their Lord gives them glad tidings of a Mercy from Him, and acceptance, and of Paradise for them wherein are everlasting delights. [9:20-1]

We have to raise the expectation of our brothers the way Rasulullah ﷺ raised their expectation and bring them to a platform of struggle and sacrifice. In this manner, sahaba ﷺ who were penniless like Abu Hurayrah ﷺ became governors, Bilal ﷺ whose footsteps were heard in Jannah and Abu Dhar ﷺ who became more well-known among the angels than men [72].

One needn't worry about destiny - whatever to happen, will happen. Be happy with whatever is given by Allah ﷻ. Creator of all conditions is Allah ﷻ. Worldly calamity is not the biggest calamity. With eman sickness is a blessing, not a curse. Disease, poverty and oppression are not failure of life. Without deen life is a failure, even in the midst of all worldly blessings.

… ★ …

The End Product of the Effort & Sacrifice of Rasulullah ﷺ was Sahaba رضي الله عنهم Similar Effort & Sacrifice Will Bring Similar Result

Maulana Ilyas ؒ said:

> I am doing this because it's the work of prophethood. The more of prophetic qualities mastered the more fruitful. Rasulullah ﷺ is the best example of sacrifice and etiquette. If done correctly, the same effort will bring results like sahaba. Any deviation from the prophetic way will spread darkness.

Our effort must copy seerah - how Rasulullah ﷺ lived in Makkah and Madinah, worked inside and outside of the masjid, how he prayed etc. Rasulullah ﷺ left Makkah because he was prevented from doing his job, his followers were persecuted. Their enemies boycotted them socially & economically, eventually hatched a plan to murder Rasulullah ﷺ with impunity. Even in Madinah, kuffar had many schemes to murder him.

Sahaba ﷺ had parents whose life was saturated in shirk, sorcery, social and economic oppression including propensity to endless quarrel. The mushriks kept 360 idols inside Ka'ba and used to do tawaf naked, doing so as a mark of respect. All this troubled Rasulullah ﷺ tremendously growing up amongst them.

When Rasulullah ﷺ was endowed with prophethood, it was through sheer tenacity, relentless effort, supreme character and above all help of Allah ﷻ that these people became the best generation. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *The best of the people are my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them [3, 4].*

As Maulana Umar Palanpuri ﷺ explained they were the best generations not because of their race, colour or riches but because of their the pure hearts, and outstanding deeds of sacrifice, steadfastness, high-mindedness and such qualities they developed as followers of Rasulullah ﷺ.

When da'wah is made upon the methodology as prescribed in seerah, then Allah will be with them. Sahaba ﷺ learnt in the environment of the masjid and in the path of Allah. In Makkah, they received regular talim in the house of Arkam ﷺ. We must be careful that in the name of da'wah something else is not being pursued. After preparing Musa ﷺ and his brother, Allah said He is with them.

قَالَ لَا تَخَافَآ ۖ إِنَّنِي مَعَكُمَآ أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَىٰ ۞

> [Allah] said, "Fear not. Indeed, I am with you both; Hearing and Seeing. [20:46]

Ummah is not the name of a tribe or nation. This is an ummah of a'mals set upon pure eman, not of colour, language, land etc. Rasulullah ﷺ built this ummah with people from all strata of society, from slaves to the leaders, ulama to traders, it had Shuaib ﷺ (Roman trader), Bilal ﷺ (black slave), Salman ﷺ (Persian), Emigrants and Ansar (Madinese who accommodated the emigrants), it had men, women (Sumaiya ﷺ), children (Ali ﷺ) and many others from diverse backgrounds.

Calling on qawm (nation) is slaughtering the ummah. Check our deeds and intention to see whether the ummah is being helped and not. Allah knows what's in the heart.

One whose fikr and deeds, life and wealth can draw goodness from the treasures of Allah, then even eating, sleeping and time with family will be deen. Opposite actions will bring evils: destroy deen, corrupting lives, and harm the Muslims.

Our end goal, no matter how we serve this ummah, must be the growth and protection of eman and a'mal of the people. If this is not happening then we need to reflect on what exactly are we achieving? Have we got a misplaced objective? Maulana Yusuf ﷺ told a group of students who graduated from madrasah as follows:

> My dear brothers! You have completed a study of Saheeh Bukhari, acquired the knowledge, now three types of effort on this knowledge is necessary:
>
> - Have yaqin according to this knowledge
> - Produce a'mal according to this knowledge
> - Spread this yaqin and a'mal in the whole world
>
> Efforts were made on the knowledge brought by Rasulullah ﷺ in these three fronts initially, because of which then Roman and Persian empires which were upon various worldly philosophies and falsehoods broke into pieces…
>
> All this can happen in the present time. The only condition is that a group will make effort like Rasulullah ﷺ and the sahaba ﷺ. Allah made the a'mals of Rasulullah ﷺ more powerful than atom bombs, every single a'mal has been made a means to change the world. Salat of Istisqa is a means of changing the condition of the land. Salat of kosuf and khosuf is to change the condition of the moon and the sun. Dua and salat of hajat can change individual and collective adverse circumstance [16].

… ★ …

Only by Returning to Da'wah, can the Ummah Change its Condition

The key to solving our condition is the realisation that we as Muslims, are of such poor quality believers that we will never see any change in our condition unless we develop as quality Muslims. Otherwise, we may have more wealth, better education, better jobs, better technology, better transport, better everything else in the external world - everything else can change around us - but we will still be where we started with, in the same state of being losers!

First of all, make our own mindset according to Islam. And this will only happen when one builds firm yakin on the fact that creation cannot do anything without the will of Allah ﷻ; whatever happens, is from Allah ﷻ; and the condition of good or evil, construction or destruction, success or failure does not come from having asbabs or not having asbabs. Rather these happen by the decisions of Allah ﷻ.

Maulana Yusuf ؒ said:

> Allah ﷻ will make the decision to establish and flourish only when I am on the sunnah of Muhammad ﷺ. Thus to remain on this path we do not need any external wealth, rather we need internal wealth. Yaqin must be on Allah. There must be a consciousness of Allah. There must be taqwa of Allah. There must be yaqin of

receiving from the treasures of Allah and opening the door of blessings upon practising the sunnah. For these internal transformations, some effort must be made. In order to remove the yaqin of success from materials and to gain yaqin of success from Allah ﷻ some time must be spent away from the materialistic life [16].

We must be alert to the fact that in this day and age many people are setting things up in the name of Islam, or in the name of da'wah, but they are far from it. So we question these programmes objectively:

- What problems are they trying to solve from the problems we see and problems we are informed about? Is it an old problem in new guise?
- What is the solution? Is there any side effect?
- Is the solution according to sunnah upon the understanding of the salaf?
- How does the programme fulfil the objects? Can we track the progress?

Such basic critical thinking may help to ascertain straight path from the stray path. How many people lose their sense of direction or the will to persevere, usually because of emotion, desire, culture, ignorance or failure to distinguish between means and objectives?

One must realise that Allah ﷻ and His messenger has explained the foremost problems and their solutions till the Hour. This ummah will undergo similar humiliation and struggles as Children of Israel. Abdullah bin 'Umar ﷺ narrates that:

> Rasulullah ﷺ said: *Every condition that afflicted the Bani Israa'eel will certainly afflict my ummah as well just as the two soles of a pair of shoes correspond with each other. (Their conditions will be so close that) Even if a person from the Bani Isra'eel committed open incest with his mother, there will be someone from my ummah who will do the same. Whereas the Bani Isra'eel split into seventy-two groups, my ummah will split into seventy-three. All these are headed for Jahannam except one.*
> Sahaba asked: Which group will this be, O Rasulullah!
> It was said: *The one that follows my ways and the ways of my sahaba [5].*

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ explains the story of Children of Israel as follows:

Musa ﷺ prepared the Children of Israel upon a'mals which progress the soul and please Allah ﷻ. He instructed them thus, "O my people! If you thread the way of eman, then have trust in Allah ﷻ, seek the help of Allah with full eman, yaqin and tawaqqul.

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَا قَوْمِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ آمَنْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ فَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُوا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُسْلِمِينَ ۞

And Musa said, "O my people, if you have believed in Allah, then put your trust in Him if you are Muslims." [10:84]

They replied, "We accepted your advice, and placed our conviction and hope upon Allah ﷻ, we supplicate to Him so that He protect us against the tyrany and oppression of Pharaoh and his rule, and relief us from the slavery of this unbelieving people." [73]

Further, in the Qur'an Allah ordered Musa ﷺ and Harun ﷺ to establish centres and places of worship in Egypt for their nation, and establish salat to build relation with Allah and mould their lives in obedience to Him [74]. They were also told to give glad tidings of acceptance of their supplication when they put into practice the above deeds.

Musa and Harun ﷺ engaged in worship and nurturing of Children of Israel as directed by Allah ﷻ. When the Children of Israel also started to pray salat and the effort to change their lives, Musa ﷺ and Harun ﷺ supplicated, "O Allah, with the wealth and other blessings you bestowed on Pharah and His people, they are misguiding the believers. O Allah, destroy their wealth." [75]

Allah ﷻ accepted their du'a and ordered them to migrate with Children of Israel from Egypt. They left Egypt and Allah ﷻ made way for them in the sea, because of which they crossed the sea peacefully. Pharaoh followed with his army but they were drowned completely. All this happened through the power of the qudrah of Allah.

This is the way of the prophets. They not only put themselves and their people upon the commands of Allah ﷻ, they patiently bore difficulties in the path of Allah, and Allah solved their problems with the power of His qudrah. This is what is referred to in

the Qur'an as "*sunnatullah*" or sunnah of Allah. And His sunnah is immutable:

فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ۖ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللَّهِ تَحْوِيلًا

But you will never find in the way of Allah any change, and you will never find in the way of Allah any alteration. [35:43]

So if we see our condition as one of humiliation and oppression then this was not an accident. Rasulullah ﷺ warned was about it and the remedy! He ﷺ prescribed it long before this state came into existence.

Rasulullah ﷺ warned:

> *When you deal in 'eenah (usury-based) transactions, hold onto the tails of cows, become satisfied with agriculture, and leave off jihad, then Allah will cover you with humiliation, and he will not withdraw it until you return to your original deen* [76].

Now, the beginning of the solution is to return to deen and if we do so, then and only then the problems of the ummah will depart. To put it another way, what is required is a complete "U" turn, that is to return to correct aqeedah, and undertake a programme of tasfiyah and tarbiya upon the manhaj of the salaf.

Eman is not "See and believe". Eman is to believe in the unseen. Life without da'wah will weaken eman. Sahaba ﷺ always took care to safeguard and increase their eman. Abdullah ibn Rawaha ﷺ used to call others saying, "Come increase eman." Similar stories are reported from Muadh ibn Jabal ﷺ.

Eman is not hereditary, eman cannot be bought in a shop - it has to be learnt, to be acquired through sacrifice and effort. Whatever you want to come into existence, start discussions on it. Unless ummah returns to da'wah, it's condition will not change.

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said:

> If we make intention for the whole world till Day of Judgement, then our thinking will change.

The world is full of spiders webs when there are no righteous people. Allah wiped out Roman and Persian webs. Maulana Yusuf ﷺ used to say:

> Mould yourselves in line with Rasulullah ﷺ. Allah will break and destroy any obstacle to such a person as the shell of an egg.

Deen will come through the path of deen. If there is no eman, then their talk will corrupt eman. The work of deen should be in the manner performed by Rasulullah ﷺ - that methodology will bring deen till Day of Judgement.

When the need of da'wah came sahaba ﷺ left salat with imam and jamat of sahaba even though it was so dear to them. They made such sacrifices because of the need of deen and its effort.

When Rasulullah ﷺ was sending Mu'adh ﷺ to Yemen to teach them about Islam, he bade farewell to him as he walked for some distance out of the city alongside Mu'adh ﷺ. Finally, he said to him:

> *O Mu'adh, perhaps you shall not meet me again after this year - perhaps when you return you shall see only my masjid and my grave.*

Mu'adh ﷺ then started to cry uncontrollably. Those with him wept too. A feeling of sadness and grief overtook him as he parted from his beloved Rasulullah ﷺ.

Every one of the sahaba ﷺ was da'ee, alim, servant etc. Today the ummah is so low because of leaving the individual and collective da'wah. Let alone the reality of kalima, some cannot even recite it. Such incredible losses are due to us leaving the work of da'wah.

Da'wah is such an effort, any ummati will be at a loss, the ummah will be at a loss, if they are cut off from it regardless of circumstance. As sacrifices are made to bring deen in the lives of people, then the person making the effort will taste its sweetness, which is far more than the sweetness of amassing materials, food, clothes, fame, family and influence etc.

Maulana Ilyas ﷺ swore three times:

> I don't need respect, materials …I want this ummah to be like the way Rasulullah ﷺ left it.

If the condition of the people become corrupt, and all the pious people of the nation can cry to Allah in supplication for their rectification, then their duas will be powerless to improve their condition [16]. All of the children of Adam are sinners - the prophets were sent precisely to this kind of people. So the da'ee does not look at how corrupt the people are, they look at the commands of Allah ﷻ and the examples of the prophets. This da'wah is for all, we do not choose who we give da'wah to.

Ibn Kathir said, "…Allah, by His grace and mercy towards His creation, did not stop calling them to the truth and to the wise Reminder, i.e., the Qur'an, even though they were heedless and turned away from it. Indeed, He sent it so that those who were decreed to be guided might be guided by it, and so that proof might be established against those who were decreed to be [2]." Regarding this Allah ﷻ informed us in the Qur'an:

أَفَنَضْرِبُ عَنْكُمُ الذِّكْرَ صَفْحًا أَنْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا مُسْرِفِينَ ۞

> Shall We then (warn you not and) take away the Reminder (Qur'an) from you, because you are a transgressing people. [43:5]

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said:

> Only Allah ﷻ changes the condition, He can change whatever condition and whenever He wishes. Upon us is the servitude, effort is demanded, upon this Allah will change condition.

He also said:

> Those relations with apparent means which we made our natural habits and acts, and exerting all effort to get weak, these very relations are drawing the calamities upon the world.

Khilafa is given to those adapted the deen. When people leave deen, khilafa weakens. But how do we establish deen without khilafa? Deen comes through da'wah, which is the first thing shown by Rasulullah ﷺ and Allah's closeness is achieved through it. Our original work is da'wah. We should do tawbah and go back to original work.

Maulana Sa'ad ﷺ said:

> The purpose of our going in the path of Allah ﷻ is to take hardship for the sake of Allah and rise up to the need of deen (takaza). With this, there will be the help of Allah and hidaya.

This effort must be discharged at any cost just as it was for Muhammad ﷺ. When a man gives importance to his job he is very careful about it. When we take this effort above jobs and other commitments, it becomes easy to sacrifice. We need to strive with life, wealth and dua. Then dua will be accepted.

We are not giving the right of the work it deserves. Maulana Saeed Ahmad Khan ﷺ used to say, "Keep talk of Great great. Keep lowly low."

Once some VIPs were introduced to Maulana Yusuf ﷺ by their worldly titles such as minister, doctor etc., he said:

> Had you introduced them as a donkey or some other animals I would have understood better…
> When our salaf were introduced, it wasn't said that this one is the owner of many factories, this is the owner of this many villas or cars. Rather it used to be said he is a Badri, he joined Uhud, that brother participated in such and such battle, and this brother made such and such sacrifice for the sake of deen. This is how they were introduced.

The first obligation, is to establish the yaqin on Allah ﷻ and to struggle to establish that amongst people. In doing that if we tolerate a little bit of fear, then we will be free from eternal fire. If we tolerate a little bit of hunger, then we will be free from eternal hunger. By separating from family-children, we will be together eternally.

Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said:

> Upon the dua of jamat, Allah will help against apparent system.

The da'ee must downgrade the worldly affairs. The da'ee should take account of himself concerning the six qualities every day. Fikr is like petrol for self-rectification and tabligh. Maulana Ilyas ﷺ would have given the name "Tahreeq-e-eman" to this effort because this effort strengthens eman.

… ★ …

Tabligh for the True Soul & Essence of Deen

It is difficult to appreciate fully the great effort begun in Mewat, India by Maulana Ilyas ﷺ in reviving the da'wah & tabligh without knowing a brief history of the environment in which this came about. He is rightfully considered mujaddid of da'wah effort of last century. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

> *This 'ilm will be carried from every generation of ulama by its honest and fair-minded ulama. They will reject from it the alteration of the extremists, the appropriation of the corruptors, and the interpretation of the ignorant ones [12].*

Due to negligence of ulama the religious condition of Mewatis sunk so low that there was little to distinguish between their belief and practices and wholesale apostasy. Major Pawlett wrote in Alwar Gazetteer in 1878:

> All the Meos are, now, Muslims, but only in name. Their village deities are the same as those of the Hindu landlords, and they celebrate several Hindu festivals…They engage the services of the Brahmins to fix dates of marriages.…Very few of them know the kalima, and fewer still observe salat regularly.…Men wear dhoti and loin-cloth. …Mosques are rarely to be seen in their villages …

The maulana visited Mewat, and after much persuasion, the maktab was established. He used to say, "Give me the pupils, I will provide the money."

Once someone presented a purse with the request that he spends it exclusively for his own needs. He replied, “If we do not regard Allah’s work our own, how can we claim to be His bondsmen?” Within a few years, hundreds of similar maktabs were running in Mewat.

Despite the apparent success, Maulana Ilyas became dissatisfied with the progress. He found that the students who graduated out of these maktabs were incapable of rendering any real service to deen. Maktabs could barely exert any influence on the general pattern of living. In addition, it did not address the problem of adults incurring the displeasure of Allah owing to their apathy and ignorance.

There was one incident which caused the maulana to further lose enthusiasm for maktabs. During one tour one young man who completed the study of Qur’an was presented before the maulana with many laudations. The sight of the man who was clean-shaven, wearing a dress which could not distinguish him from non-Muslims utterly shocked him. On the bright side in such tours, the maulana was able to solve many local disputes and family quarrels. The mewatis used to say, ”This man so lean and thin, and yet he finds a solution to whatever problem he takes on hand, and, somehow, even the most strong-headed obstinate persons submit to his decision without argument.”

Upon returning home from Hajj in 1925, Maulana Ilyas ﷺ begun tours and exhorting others to propagate basic tenets of Islam such as kalima and salaat directly to the masses. After much persuasion, only a few people joined his movement. Then jamat was formed and the tour was planned for the few days and when that tour ended it was planned for a few more days. This carried on in mewat for few years.

Maulana Ilyas ﷺ was asking people to give time: days, weeks and months - for the sake of the deen. He desired to rekindle the spark of eman and ignite the spirit of dedication and sacrifice in this life for rewards of the akhira. Only then inclination and ability to follow the complete deen become automatic. He wanted the workers of the movement to attain the level of suffering losses in trade and agriculture willingly for the sake of Allah. Despite the difficulties and setbacks, in the beginning, this enabled the Mewatis to realise the higher aims and ideals and subordinate material interests.

Abul Hasan Nadwi ﷺ comments on this success thus:

> The tremendous change that came over Mewat as a result of the untiring efforts of tabligh workers who moved from village to village, carrying their luggage on their backs, is, perhaps, without a parallel in recent times. Within a few years, the whole region emerged from darkness into light. Had a government, with all its resources in men and material, tried to bring the people nearer to eman, it would not have achieved so much in such a short time.
>
> …Anyone who saw the tabligh parties of Mewat, travelling on foot, with blankets thrown on their shoulders, the siparas tucked under the arms and parched grain or bread tied in a corner of the mantle, their tongues engaged in dhikr, eyes showing the signs of nightly vigil and the mark of sajdah on the foreheads would have been reminded of the martyrdom of sahaba of Bir Ma'ona who were killed while going on the mission of teaching the Qur'an and imparting the knowledge of the commandments of the shari'ah on the orders of Rasulullah ﷺ.

The Criteria is Quality, not Quantity

The object of this work is to bring six qualities within ourselves. This is the case whether people accept us or not, whether they go out or not. So we see our eman increasing by giving dawah, correcting our ibadah; increased desire for ilm within us and amongst laymen, doing dhikr in every condition, discharging rights of others and fervour to do their ikram increasing; developing desire to please Allah and utilise own health, wealth in the path of Allah; if the fervour for these is increasing then our work is moving forward. This will draw people's attention to this work - that I need to do this!

As Maulana Yusuf ﷺ said the sort of people who are required to do this work are those who, despite living in the materialistic environment, remain steadfast on the yaqin and belief that deen will only flourish through sacrifice in the path of da'wah, keeping their sight steady on the all-powerful qudrah of kun-fayakun of Allah ﷻ and then dua. The path of Muhammad ﷺ is the path of da'wah and sacrifice, not a path of power, means and materials. When sacrifice is made for Islam, it flourishes even if surrounded by enemies. However, when sacrifice is not made then Islam disappears amid all the power, means and materials!

As part of a long hadith, Aisha ﷺ said to an Iraqi man who visited her to ask few questions and see her copy of the scripture [3]:

> …When the people embraced Islam, the verses regarding the lawful and unlawful were revealed. If the first verse to be revealed was not to drink wine, they would have said: we will not stop drinking. And if it had been revealed not to commit adultery, they would have said: we will not stop committing adultery…

Recognise that an old-timer is the one who has rendered himself with high qualities. One does not become an old-timer because of spending one year, two years, three years or forty years - unless the person acquires the right qualities. In the court of Allah, an old-timer would have developed many refined qualities, even if they have not spent much time. These are the qualities which require effort and sacrifice to develop. Here is a partial list of such qualities [77]:

- Taqwa & Tawaqqul
- Zuhd (abstinence) & Qanaa't (content with little)
- Sabr & Shukr
- Adl & Insaf
- Predominant love for Allah & His messenger
- Desire to be Muhajir & Ansar.

The aim of this effort of deen is not simply to spread partial or small a'mals. Rather the aim is, having continuously spent all resources upon creation, upon the human belief and yaqin which has become so corrupt by the effect of materialism that it lost the condition, capacity and quality to benefit from the Creator, in order to:

- connect eman and yaqin to the Creator,
- spend health and wealth to build that eman and yaqin,
- fulfil the commands of Allah to come out of homes to be in His path,
- experience the difficulties in this path,
- prepare others to fulfil these commands and
- inspire them to benefit from the Creator, so that they also repeatedly experience the difficulties while spending their own resources in the path of Allah with the yaqin and hope, da'wah, utilising their time and to cry for that [16].

Basis of This Effort [78]

1. **Person to Person** - Not by big gatherings or ijtima. Not about talks and speeches. In Makkah the work was done primarily by individuals and in Madinah the work was done primarily by jamats. Ijtima creates a good environment but not good for individual attention.

2. **Heart** - Not intellect. Not thought, philosophy, ideas. It's about burning heart, having a concern. Everyone can have a concern, weeping or burning heart, but not high intellectual thought. When heart burns, it pierces the hearts of others.

3. **Footwork** - Not by pen. Those who do not desire deen, they will not come to you. On the contrary, you will go again and again.

4. **Effort by Men** - Not by means & materials. Person is the target, not materials. What is required is sacrifice & striving.

5. **Humbleness** - Not by pride and arrogance. Regardless of what people do, we need a compassionate heart. Not revenge. If you water from a jar, the neck must bend.

6. **Peace** - Not by war. Rasulullah ﷺ accepted many humiliating conditions to maintain peace, eg. Hudaibiyah.

7. **Unity** - Not by argumentation & splintering. There are thousands of things that unite the ummah - only about 200 differences in masail, such differences are mercy and certainly not a source of disunity. Take masail from local ulama. No need to argue on the differences of opinion.

8. **Mashwara** - Not by dictating. For all collective matters, mashwara is necessary. Even Rasulullah ﷺ was commanded to make mashwara.

9. **Enjoining Good** - Not forbidding evil, "يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ". This indirectly leads to the latter anyway. Adhan is a complete da'wah as read in du'a for muazzin da'wah at-Tamma. New baby needs soft provisions, like those of weak eman. All six qualities in tabligh errand are enjoining good. When darkness occurs, bring light; "إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ" [79]. Hence the worst person can participate to become mu'min with this effort. Forbidding evil has its own limits and conditions.

10. **Under Cover** - By *istitar*, not open *ishtihar*. Not through propaganda or publicity. This effort mainly related to interior - heart, eman. We should cover our own a'mals and faults of others.

11. Concise - By *ijmal*, not *tafseel*. Not details or elaboration. Declare the truth - no need to justify, clarify. Acceptance is upon others. In the Qur'an there is no details of a'mal - yet every ayat is an ocean of knowledge. Keep explanation of six qualities simple. Maulana Ilyas ﷺ said, "Bringing details into six points is dangerous". Keep it simple.

12. Usool - Focus on usools, not on furu or branches. We are concerned about the root of the deen.

We accept all the commandments in Shariah which has fundamentals and branches. First of all, the major things need to be understood, then the matter relating to the branches will be understood. This effort is not focused on the branches of Shariah. In jamat all kinds of people participate, yet they practice same kind of programme and develop same habits.

13. Glad Tidings - By *Tashheer*, not *tanfeer*. Give glad tidings, not create hatred. Truth is bitter - sugar-coat it. Not hurting other's feelings, or causing resentment. Not taunting or criticising those who do not conform immediately.

14. Gentle Encouragement - By *targeeb*, not *tambih*. Give gentle encouragement, not warning or telling off. We cannot punish or cut-off anybody. Just rely on gentle reminders and dua, don't make rectification of others a target.

Avoid Distractions

The elders of tabligh & da'wah further advise shunning:

- Newspapers, media and other contemporary means of propaganda.
- Debates, fiqhi issues which have divergent opinions, and anything else which might create disunity.
- Mentioning the help of Allah that came in our time, focus on help to prophets and sahaba.
- Discussing current affairs.
- Discussing weaknesses that appeared in the ummah in the form of eman, a'mal and akhlaq. Instead focus on strengths and qualities to be achieved.

Make A'mals Alive

The promises of Allah ﷻ are not on lifeless a'mals or lifeless worship. So how does a'mals become alive? To achieve this in every a'mal, as explained by Maulana Umar Palanpuri ﷺ, we need to do mujahada (persevere) upon five matters:

1. Correct Yaqeen - This will strengthen the eman. For this a two-fold effort is required:
    - Remove yaqin of creation. The yaqin of creation automatically takes root in the heart - solution is negation & sacrifice. Thus periodically leave means & materials, business & home etc.
    - Bring yaqin of Allah. This does not come on its own - hence, effort is necessary. The means for this is repeatedly engaging in a'mals of da'wah.
2. Correct Motivation - Whatever Allah informed us about the virtue of that a'mal, whatever Allah promised with that a'mal, have firm conviction of attaining that (ihtisaab). This is why we need to sit in the gatherings of talim and to hear about the virtues of a'mal.
3. Correct Methodology - A'mals must be conducted according to Sunnah. To know this we must sit with those who have the relevant ilm: Ulama of fiqh for rules & regulations, Ulama of da'wah for da'wah effort etc.
4. Correct Consciousness - Be in a state of awareness of Allah, whether we are inside salat or outside running our businesses etc. Rasulullah ﷺ described it as the state of ihsan. To develop this we need to do frequent dhikr, recitation of Qur'an, etc.

    رِجَالٌ لَّا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ ۞

    Men whom neither trade nor sale diverts from the Remembrance of Allah (with heart and tongue), nor from performing salat, nor from giving the zakat… [24:37]
5. Correct Intention - Seeking only the pleasure of Allah. How is it achieved? This is gained when the effort of deen is done through the sacrifice of health, wealth and desires.

Make mujahada in bringing these five matters in salat, then in business, then in weddings - slowly bring these to everything we do.

One practices upon the above matters in the path of Allah. To learn deen we are going out in the path of Allah. We are also going to prepare people to come out also to learn deen. Maulana Saeed Ahmad Khan ﷺ wrote in one of his letters [25]:

> One should not emerge in this field of da'wah with a motive of reforming others but one should come out with the sole intention of encouraging others to come out into the path of Allah Ta'aala as well. Those who fuss over the spiritual reformation of others tend to create discord and malice amongst themselves all due to the deception of shaytaan and the evils of the nafs. Hence the sole object should be personal reformation together with a firm resolution to learn.

The best ikram to Muslims is to make them realise their true purpose of life, sacrifice their desires for the sake of Allah ﷻ and He will be happy with them. Allah ﷻ will be happier than a bedouin who lost his camel carrying food and water and then finds it in front of him.

The ummah must come on to the purpose for which it was created. Today purdah is broken, haram is committed in the name of progress. They do not understand. We must realise that everything worldly (business, family, jobs, etc.) should be secondary. Primarily, we are the slaves of Allah, carrying the message of Rasulullah ﷺ. Rectification of our circumstances will follow rectification of our a'mals and rectification of a'mals will follow rectification of eman. Everybody is in need of it and this effort must be done every day.

When we know shari'ah, want to obey Allah, but the environment is poisonous, shaitan and nafs overpowering us, what's the cure? Allah ﷻ says, "Fafirru ilallah", not to this place or that place. Running water is clean - this khuruj is a cleansing act. When there is obstruction, the water goes around it, and if the water is plenty, then obstruction would not show.

In khuruj, when people go out in the path of Allah purely for His sake, people change their passion (*jazba*), they come to obedience (*itayat*) and develop zeal to serve (*khidmat*) etc. because of noorani a'mal of Masjid Nabawi. We should repeat this again and again with the aim of ultimately raising our eman to such a level that the value of a brick of gold and a brick of clay become equal in our sight.

40

Victory is Inevitable When the Hidden System of Allah سبحانه وتعالى Comes to Support

Through His might and power Allah ﷻ brings to reality, some of what is apparent to human and yet some are hidden from them. No earthly power can frustrate the decision of Allah Almighty.

From the apparent power of Allah ﷻ, we see how He brings out a soft plant from a hard seed and it grows to have more seeds and trees. From the apparent power of Allah ﷻ we see how He creates sweet orange and sour lemon from the same soil!

From the hidden power of Allah ﷻ, we see the survival of Musa عليه السلام despite Pharaoh slaughtering thousands of male babies of Bani Israel. From the hidden power of Allah ﷻ, we see how Rasulullah ﷺ escaped from Makkah from his house surrounded by eleven assassins and his protection in the cave with Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه.

Through prophets and divine books Allah ﷻ reveals such matters which are not perceptible to humans in any other way. Yet these things Allah has been doing, currently doing and will continue to do so in future. This hidden system, if comes to support, then success will come even with apparently little or no means.

Allah's help is assured upon two internal conditions:

1. Total freedom of the heart from the notion that anything other than Allah can do anything, and
2. A heart totally absorbed by the greatness of Allah.

The divine help is for only as long as our sight is only on Allah, and with certainty that nothing can happen from other than Allah. Allah ﷻ assures us in the Qur'an:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۚ يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ۞

> Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (authority) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion, that which He has chosen for them. And He will surely give them in exchange security after their fear, (for) they worship Me and do not associate anything with Me. But whoever disbelieves after this, they are the rebellious. [24:55]

In this ayat Allah ﷻ promises three gifts which are conditional upon us doing four things. Four things we need to do are:

1. Purify eman
2. Perform a'mals according to sunnah
3. Worship Allah alone
4. Do not associate partners to Allah in any way.

The gift which Allah will bestow in return are:

1. Khilafat on earth
2. Establishment of Islam
3. Peace & Security.

The hidden system of Allah ﷻ came in the aid of sahaba ﷺ who wore tatty clothes, their houses tiny, their resources insignificant, barely survived on dates. Against them were such mighty powers of Kaisar and Kisra. The worldly people, unaware of the hidden system, were astonished at the speed at which they changed the world forever.

But the same Allah ﷻ is always there, in every age, with all His names and attributes. When His hidden system comes in support, then life is made. On the other hand, if human behaviour contradicts this system then life is ruined in the midst of all the means.

Therefore when the information about the hidden system is revealed through prophets, with eagerness mankind must pay attention to it. Allah ﷻ informs us about this system:

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ ۖ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ۞

No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision. He is the Subtle, the Aware. [6:103]

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَصَائِرُ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلَيْهَا وَمَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِحَفِيظٍ ۞

There has come to you enlightenment from your Lord, so whoever sees, will do so for [the benefit of] his ownself, and whoever blinds himself, will do so to his own harm, and [say], "I am not a guardian over you." [6:104]

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۞

And verily, Allah is with the believers. [8:19]

When people

- Listen to divine revelation with eagerness and full attention,
- See the apparent system of the world in light of the divinely revealed hidden system,
- Ponder over with heart and mind

they will truly realise who Allah ﷻ is and they will be endowed with the light of guidance. The light of eman will radiate, good a'mal will come from them - they will see success in good deeds and failure in evil deeds. They will rush to good deeds and will not care whether that is in line with the apparent system. Similarly, they will refrain from evil deeds even if it goes against the apparent system.

If we need something we shall ask Allah directly, eg. through salat. When sahaba ﷺ received help directly through salat, it boosted their eman. Going for da'wah in abnormal condition will draw direct help of Allah.

Allah ﷻ promises direct help to those who help His deen. This is not about helping Muslims, it's about the preservation of deen, revival of deen and spread of deen:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا أَنْصَارَ اللَّهِ

> O you who believe! Be you helpers (in the cause) of Allah. [61:14]

This is what 'Esa ﷺ asked to his close companions, hawariuun.

Similarly, during the days of Hajj, Rasulullah ﷺ used to ask:

> *Who will support me in conveying the Message of my Lord? Verily, the Quraysh have prevented me from conveying the Message of my Lord.*

Allah the Exalted and Most Honoured raised Aws and Khazraj to support the prophet. They were the residents of Madinah who gave the pledge to him and supported him, vowing to protect him from mankind and the jinns if he migrated to them. When he migrated to them with his companions, they fulfilled their vow to Allah. This is the reason why Allah and His messenger called them, Ansar, the supporters. The name became synonymous with them. May Allah be pleased with them and please them as well [2].

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ۞

> O you who believe! If you support (in the cause of) Allah, He will help you, and make your foothold firm. [47:7]

وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ۞

> Verily, Allah will help those who help His (cause). Truly, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty. [22:40]

Helping Muslims such as looking after their welfare is not helping deen. When Abu Bakr ﷺ became khalifa he headed for the market to support his family until a stipend was allocated to him from the Baitul Mal. However, the same Abu Bakr ﷺ left his family with young children and a blind father in Makkah, taking all money with him, when he emigrated to Madinah. This was his helping the deen of Allah - so special divine Help was due for him and his family.

And how did Allah ﷻ help them? The next hadith is enough as a witness. It is related from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri ؓ that Rasulullah ﷺ said [3]:

> *A time will come to people when groups of people will go on expedition and will say, 'Is there any among you who kept the company of the Rasulullah ﷺ ?' They will say, Yes.' And victory will be given to them.*
> *Then a time will come to people when it will be said, 'Is there any among you who kept the company of the Companions of Rasulullah ﷺ ?' They will say, 'Yes.' And victory will be given to them.*
> *Then a time will come to people when groups of people will go on expedition. It will be said, 'Is there any among you who kept the company of the companions of the Companions of Rasulullah ﷺ ?' They will say, 'Yes.' And victory will be given to them.*

Once Saad ibn abi Waqqas ؓ wrote to Umar ؓ for help from battlefield. Umar ؓ only gave him 10,000 against 200,000. Umar ؓ replied, "Next time don't ask for help from Medinah", "I already gave you Allah". You do:

- Safeguard your and your troop's a'mals. Don't go against the commands of Allah.
- Even if a'mals are according to Allah, still don't start fighting. Send several of your men to Kisra to give da'wah. If he accepts - no fighting. If he disobeys then he will be fighting Allah - in which case Kisra can never win. Falsehood was never demolished by people - it was only done by Allah.

Saad ibn abi Waqqas ؓ followed accordingly. So connect to Allah and call others to Him. After da'wah any trouble from them will cause their destruction.

This tabligh is so powerful that to whom da'wah is given, either he benefits or get destroyed. Rasulullah ﷺ said [3]:

> *The example of a Mujahid in Allah's Cause - and Allah knows better who really strives in His Cause - is like a person who observes fasts and offers salat continuously. Allah guarantees that He will admit the Mujahid in His Cause into Paradise if he is killed, otherwise He will return him to his home safely with rewards and war booty.*

Allah ﷻ reminds us in the Qur'an, to remember those days when believers were few and lacking armoury, yet He gave them victory:

وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ ۖ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ⁎

> And already had Allah given you victory at Badr while you were few in number. Then fear Allah; that you will be grateful. [3:123]

So one alim said in response to the person who pointed to another ayat where Allah said "prepare yourselves… [80]" like them:

> It's shaitan who says you can win with this or that weapon. But Allah says you only win with His help. Allah asked Musa ﷺ to correct Bani Israel so that Allah gives victory to them over Pharaoh.

Allah ﷻ only obliterates kufr when it comes against the means of da'wah. Thus we must:

- Have intention to reach everywhere to propagate deen,
- Bring every ummati in this original work,
- Bring every ummati in the temperament of sahaba.

This is the real matter. This is the sum short of the many stories narrated in the Qur'an, that solution to our problems, success and salvation is in the decision of Allah and His help. And these things are with those people who became His, and who strive in His path.

… ★ …

Chapter Notes

1. Scientists, even in the twenty-first century, are struggling to explain how the sunlight is captured in leaves as photons using Quantum mechanics, the details of the processes and mechanism which convert carbon-dioxide into oxygen. This is just one of billions and trillions of processes that Allah is sustaining using His qudrah.
2. Qur'an 16:44.
3. Qur'an 33:21.
4. Qur'an 7:157, 4:65.
5. Qur'an 4:64, 4:80
6. Targhib, Sahih of ibn Khuzaymah
7. Narrated by Abu Dawood (4341); al-Tirmidhi (3085). Verified in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah (494).
8. At-Tabari and others.
9. *Majmoo' al-Fataawa* of Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah.
10. Reported by al-Tabarani, al-Bayhaqi and Ibn Abi Shaybah and refer to Silsilah al-Sahihah (no. 1803).
11. Qur'an 2:259.
12. Al-Bukhari recorded that Yusuf bin Mahak said, "I was with the Mother of the faithful, A'isha, when she said, 'When I was still a young playful girl in Makkah, this ayat was revealed to Muhammad.
13. For the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic Monotheism or Jihad, etc.
14. Sunan al-Tirmidhī 1209. Sahih li ghayrihi (authentic due to external evidence) according to Al-Albani.
15. At-Tabari 24:369.
16. Qur'an 2:249.
17. Ibn Asaakir, as quoted in Kanzul Ummaal [15].
18. Targheeb.

19. **Abu Mu'liq ﷺ assisted by an angel:** was a person who was always engaged in ibadah and was extremely abstinent. Once he faced a robber who wanted to kill him. He requested the robber to allow him to pray two raqat salat which he granted. After the salat one of the dua he made was:

    يَا وَدُوْدُ يَا ذَالْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيْدِ يَا فَعَّالَا لِمَا يُرِيْدُ أَسْأَلُكَ بِعِزَّتِكَ الَّتِيْ لَا تُرَامُ وَمُلْكِكَ الَّذِيْ لاَ يُضَامُ وَبِنُوْرِكَ الَّذِيْ مَلَأَ اَرْكَانَ عَرْشِكَ أَنْ تَكْفِيْنِيْ شَرَّ هَذَا اللِّصَّ يَا مُغِيْثُ أَغِثْنِيْ

    0 The Most Loving! 0 Master of the Glorious Throne! 0 the One Who does as He pleases! By Your Honour that none can hope to have, by Your kingdom that none can harm and by Your light that fills the foundations of Your throne do I implore You to protect me from the evil of this robber. 0 Helper, do help me.

    After making the dua thrice suddenly an rider came with a spear in support of Abu Mu'liq ﷺ and killed the robber. The rider then explained,

    > I am an angel of the fourth heaven. When you first made the du'a, I heard the doors of the heavens rattle. When you made the du'a the second time, I heard the inhabitants of the heavens cry out. When you again made the du'a for the third time and it was announced that this was the du'a of a person in distress, I sought permission from Allah to grant me the ability to kill the robber. You ought to know the good news that whoever makes wudhu, performs four rakats salat and then makes that du'a, his du'a will be answered whether he is in distress or not.

    Reported by Ibn Abi Dunya in his Mujaabad Da'wah,as quoted Hayatus Sahaba (Vol.3 Page 542). There is another similar story regarding Zaid bin Haritha ﷺ reported by Ibn Abdul Birr in his Istiaab (Vol.l Pg.548) as mentioned in Hayatus Sahaba.

20. Abu Nu'aym in his Hilya.

21. Abu Nu'aym in his Dalaa'il (Pg.212). Bayhaqi has reported a similar narration, a s quoted in Al-Bidaayah wan Nihaayah (Vo1.6 Pg. 153).

22. Muwatta of Imam Malik.

23. Narrated by Ibn Maajah (4024); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Ibn Maajah.

24. Al-Tabaqat of Ibn Sa'd.

25. Ibn Majah. Sahih according to Al-Albani.

26. Recorded by Ahmad (4167), al-Hakim (1809), and Ibn Hibban (984).

27. Musannaf ibn Abi Shaybah, Hadith: 31064 and Kitabuz Zuhd of Imam 'Abdullah Ibnul Mubarak ﷺ, Hadith: 314. Also see Al-Isabah, number: 1483.

28. Musnad Ahmad 4423, Sahih according to Ahmad Shakir.

29. In Sharh Muslim.

30. Fuztu Warabbil Ka'ba.

31. Narrated by Abu Dawood (no. 417); al-Tabarani in al-Mu'jam al-Awsat (5/215); al-Bayhaqi in Shu'ab al-Eman, from Abu Madeenah al-Darimi. Classed as saheeh in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah (2648).

32. Related by al-Qaadee 'Iyaad in ash-Shifaa' (2/676).

33. Variously reported by Waki in al-Zuhd (no. 315), Ahmad in al-Zuhd (p. 202), al-Darimi in the introduction of his Sunan (1/69), at-Tabarani in al-Kabir (9/154). It is Sahih.

34. Narrated by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr in al-Jaami', no. 1810.

35. See Tafsir ibn Kathir.

36. Sirat Ibn Hisham (Biography of the Prophet). Abridged by Abdus-Salam M. Harun, Translated by Inas A. Farid, Al-Falah Foundation, Cairo, 2000.

37. Ibn Kathir, *Al-Sira al-Nabawiyya*, Translated by Professor Trevor Le Gassick, Volume II, Garnet Publishing LTD, 2006.

38. Fath ul Bari.

39. **Hudhayfa goes on spying:** Once Hudhayfa was relating the events in which they had participated with Rasulullah . Those sitting listening to him commented how they would have behaved in various ways if they had been present. One Kufan said, 'If we'd lived at his [prophet's] time, we'd never have let his foot so much as touch the ground; we'd have carried him on our shoulders.'

    Hudhayfa then said:

    > You shouldn't wish for that. There we were, drawn up in battle array, keeping down, while Abu Sufyan and his forces were above us, while the Jews of Banu Qurayza were down below us, making us fear for our families. We never experienced any night so black and violent as that; the winds blew fiercely with great explosions like thunderbolts. It was so dark we couldn't even see our fingers.
    >
    > The backsliders began asking Rasulullah permission to withdraw, saying that their homes were exposed -though they were not exposed. He gave his permission to leave to each person who asked and so they would slip away. We were some 300 men in number. Rasulullah received us one by one until eventually my turn came; I had nothing on to protect me from the enemy and the cold except a woollen coat of my wife that came down no further than my knees. When he came to me I was kneeling down. He asked, "*And who is this?*" "Hudhayfa," I replied, "*Hudhayfa, eh?*" "Yes, messenger of Allah," I responded, keeping down close to the ground and unwilling to get up. But I did rise and he said, "*There's activity among the enemy; bring me news of them.*" Actually, I was the most terrified of our men and certainly the coldest.
    >
    > When I left, Rasulullah supplicated, "*0 Allah, protect him from danger from his front and rear, from his left and his right, from above him and from below him.*" And, I swear, I felt from then on entirely empty of the fear and cold Allah had previously created inside me! As I was turning to leave, he called out, "*Hudhayfa, don't cause any disturbance in the enemy before you come back to me.*"
    >
    > As I approached the enemy camp, I saw the light of a fire they had burning. There I saw a dark-skinned, heavy-set man holding his hands out above the fire and then wiping them on his waist, saying, "Get the mounts ready!" I had not known Abu Sufyan before that; I took out an arrow with white feathered flights from my quiver and positioned it in my how to shoot it in the light of the fire, but then remembered how Rasulullah had told me not to cause any disturbance before I returned to him. So I stopped and returned the arrow to my quiver.
    >
    > Then I mustered up my courage and entered their camp. Those men closest to me were of Banu 'Amir, and they were saying that they should mount up and leave, since they had no permanent quarters there and that the wind was blowing right through their camp. I could hear the sounds of the stones raised by the wind striking their mounts and their equipment.

I left and went on my way back to Rasulullah ﷺ. Half way or thereabouts, I came across 20 or so horsemen, fully shrouded, who told me, "Tell your master that Allah has saved him!" So I returned to Rasulullah ﷺ, and found hi wrapped up in a blanket, praying. No sooner was I back than I felt terribly cold again and began shivering. As he prayed, Rasulullah ﷺ gestured to me and when I drew near him, he spread his blanket out over me. When something troubled Rasulullah ﷺ, he would pray. I made my report about the enemy and how they had been moving out when I left the camp. Then Almighty Allah revealed:

0 you who believe, remember Allah's favour to you, when troops came to you and We sent down against them a wind and (Our) troops you could not see. Allah is fully aware of what you do…

up to and including,

And Allah was sufficient for the believers in battle. Allah is Almighty, Powerful. [33:9-25]

Ibn Kathir, Vol3. Related by al-Hakim, al-Bayhaqi. Also in an extended form a hadith of 'Ikrima b. 'Ammar, from Muhammad h. 'Abd Allah al-Du'ali, from 'Abd al-'Aziz, the nephew of Hudhayfa.

40. Ihsan: To be patient in performing your duties to Allah, totally for Allah's sake and in accordance with the Sunnah in a perfect manner.

41. Giving to kith & Kin: All that Allah has ordered you to give them e.g; wealth, visiting, looking after them, or any other kind of help.

42. Fahsha: All evil deeds, e.g. illegal sexual acts, disobedience of parents, polytheism, to tell lies, to give false witness, to kill a life without right, etc.

43. Narrated by al-Haafiz Abu'l-Qaasim al-Tabaraani.

44. Reported by Abu Nu'aym. Also recorded in Sahih Bukhari

45. Dalâ'il al-Nubuwwa by Abu Nu'aym, vol.2, p.692.

46. Itminan

47. https://islamqa.info/en/answers/147341…

48. Mirqaat al-Mafaateeh (2/61).

49. Abu Daawood, at-Tirmidhi, Ahmad, Ibn Maajah and ad-Daarimee.

50. Reported by Imaam Askalani, in his Kitab al-Hisaba.

51. 5:54.

52. **Rasulullah ﷺ gives da'wah to Wahshi:** Narrated by Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه:

Rasulullah ﷺ sent a messenger with the invitation of Islam to Wahshi bin Harb who was responsible for killing Hamza رضي الله عنه. The messenger returned with a message from Wahshi stating, "0 Muhammad! How can you call me to Islam when you say that a murderer, a mushrik and an adulterer shall meet with a grave punishment and this punishment will be multiplied for them on the Day of Qiyaamah where they shall remain disgraced in it forever (referring to words of Allah 25:68-9.). I have committed all of these crimes, so is there any scope for me?" Allah then revealed:

Except those who repent and believe, and do righteous deeds; for those, Allah will change their sins into good deeds, and Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. [25:70]

In reply to this ayat, Wahshi said, "0 Muhammad! The condition in this ayat is uncompromising which states, 'Except for those who (sincerely) repent, accept eman and perform good actions.' What if I do not have the opportunity to fulfil it?" Allah then revealed:

Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. [4:48]

To this, Wahshi replied, "This forgiveness depends on the will of Allah. I do not know whether I shall be forgiven or not. Is there any other scope for me?" Allah then revealed the verse:

Say: "O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves (by sinning)! Despair not of the mercy of Allah, verily, Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. [39:53]

Upon hearing this, Wahshi said, "Yes, this is in order." He then accepted Islam. Other Muslims asked, "0 Rasulullah ﷺ! We had also committed the sins that Wahshi committed." Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "*It applies to all Muslims in general.*"

Reported by Tabraani. Haythami.

53. Imam Ahmad, and al-Albani.

54. Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi, *Ma'ariful-Qur'an*, Revised by Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani.

55. Ibn Hazm ﷺ said in al-Akhlaq wal Siyar.

56. Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi (who graded it saheeh) [6, 5]. Al-Hakim authenticated it, saying it conforms to the criteria of Bukhari and Muslim, and Dhahabi corroborated him. Nasa'i and Ibn Hibban also narrated it. Bayhaqi included it, and other narrations in his Sunan in a chapter entitled, "Permissibility of a man or men fighting alone in the enemy land."

57. Piety, righteousness, etc; here it means Jannah.

58. **Um-Haram ﷺ 's eagerness to join in the path of Allah:** Rasulullah ﷺ used to visit Um Haram bint Milhan ﷺ, who would offer him meals. Um-Haram was the wife of Ubada bin As-Samit. Rasulullah ﷺ once visited her and she provided him with food and started looking for lice in his head. Then Rasulullah ﷺ slept, and afterwards woke up smiling.
Um Haram asked, "What causes you to smile, O Rasulullah?"
He said. "*Some of my followers who were presented before me as fighters in Allah's Cause (on board a ship) amidst this sea cause me to smile; they were as kings on the thrones.*"
Um-Haram said, "O Rasulullah! Invoke Allah that he makes me one of them.
Rasulullah ﷺ invoked Allah for her and slept again and woke up smiling. Once again Um Haram asked, "What makes you smile, O Rasulullah?"
He replied, "*Some of my followers were presented to me as fighters in Allah's Cause*," repeating the same dream.
Um-Haram said, "O Rasulullah! Invoke Allah that He makes me one of them."
He said, "*You are amongst the first ones.*" It happened that she sailed on the sea during the Caliphate of Muawlya bin Abi Sufyan, and after she disembarked, she fell down from her riding animal and died.

59. Sahih (authentic) according to Al-Albani. Sunan al-Tirmidhi 2267

60. **Repentance of Ka'b bin Malik**: Ibn Shihab ﷺ reported that Rasulullah ﷺ made an expedition to Tabuk and he had in his mind (the idea of threatening the) Christians of Arabia in Syria and those of Rome. There were more than eighty people from the munafiqs who did not join the Tabuk expedition. A similar number of beduin Arabs and a large number of other people did not join this expedition.

The munafiqs - not only they stayed behind but they were also encouraging others not to do so, saying:

And they said: March not forth in the heat. [9:81]

Allah ﷻ 's reply to this was:

Say: "The fire of jahannam is more intense in heat. [9:81]

Ibn Shihab ﷺ (further) reported that 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b informed him that Abdullah ibn Ka'b who served as the guide of Ka'b bin 'Malik ﷺ as he became blind that he heard Ka'b bin Malik ﷺ narrate the story of his remaining behind Rasulullah ﷺ from the Battle of Tabuk. Ka'b bin Malik ﷺ said:

> I never remained behind Rasulullah ﷺ from any expedition which he undertook except the Battle of Tabuk and that of the Battle of Badr. So far as the Battle of Badr is concerned, nobody was blamed for remaining behind as Rasulullah ﷺ and the Muslims went out seeking the caravan of the Quraysh, but it was Allah Who made them confront their enemies without their intention (to do so). I had the honour to be with Rasulullah ﷺ on the night of 'Aqaba when we pledged our allegiance to Islam and it was more dear to me than my participation in the Battle of Badr, although Badr was more popular amongst people as compared with that (Tabuk). And this is my story of remaining back from Rasulullah ﷺ on the occasion of the Battle of Tabuk.
>
> Never did I possess means enough and (my circumstances) more favourable than at the occasion of this expedition. And, by Allah, I had never before this expedition simultaneously in my possession two rides. Rasulullah ﷺ set out for this expedition in extremely hot season; the journey was long and was across a waterless land and he had to confront a large army, so he informed the Muslims about the actual situation, so that they should adequately equip themselves for this expedition, and he also told them the destination where he intended to go. And the Muslims who accompanied Rasulullah ﷺ at that time were large in numbers but there was no proper record of them.
>
> Few men wanted to stay back, and were under the impression that they could easily conceal themselves until revelations from Allah, the Exalted and Glorious concerning them. And Rasulullah ﷺ set out on an expedition when the fruits were ripe and their shadows had been lengthened, and I had fondness for those fruits. Rasulullah ﷺ made preparations , as did the Muslims along with them.
>
> I also set out in the morning so that I should make preparations along with them but I came back and did nothing and said to myself: I have means enough (to make preparations) as soon as I like. And I went on doing this until people were about to depart and it was in the morning that Rasulullah ﷺ set out and the Muslims too along with him, but I made no preparations. I went early in the morning and came back, but I made no decision. I continued to do so until they hastened and covered a good deal of distance. I also made up my mind to march on and to meet them. Would that I had done that but perhaps it was not destined for me. After the departure of Rasulullah ﷺ as I went out amongst people, I was shocked to find that I did not find anyone like me but people who were labelled as hypocrites or the people whom Allah granted exemption because of their incapacity and Rasulullah ﷺ took no notice of me until he had reached Tabuk.
>
> (One day as he was sitting amongst the people in Tabuk) he said: *What has happened to Ka'b bin Malik?* A person from Banu' Salama said: Rasulullah ﷺ, the (beauty) of his cloak and his appreciation of his sides have allured him and he was thus detained.
> Mua'dh ibn Jabal said: Woe be upon that what you contend. Rasulullah ﷺ, by Allah, we know nothing about him but good.

Rasulullah ﷺ, however, kept quiet. It was during that time that he ﷺ saw a man dressed in white, shimmering like a mirage. Thereupon Rasulullah ﷺ said: *May he be Abu Khaithama* and, lo, it was Abu Khaithama al-Ansari and he was that person who contributed a sa' of dates and was scoffed at by the hypocrites.

When this news reached me that Rasulullah ﷺ was on his way back from Tabuk I was greatly perturbed. I thought of fabricating false stories and asked myself how I would save myself from his anger on the following day. In this connection, I sought the help of every prudent man from amongst the members of my family and when it was said to me that Rasulullah ﷺ was about to arrive, all the false ideas banished (from my mind) and I came to the conclusion that nothing could save me but the telling of truth, so I decided to speak the truth and it was in the morning that Rasulullah ﷺ arrived. And it was his habit that as he came back from a journey he first went to the masjid and observed two raka'as of nawafil prayer (as a mark of gratitude) and then sat amongst people. And as he did that, those who had remained behind him began to put forward their excuses and take an oath before him and they were more than eighty persons. Rasulullah ﷺ accepted their excuses on the very face of them and accepted their allegiance and sought forgiveness for them and left their secret (intentions) to Allah, until I presented myself to him.

I greeted him and he smiled and there was a tinge of anger in that. He ﷺ then said to me: *Come forward.* I went forward until I sat in front of him.
He said to me: *What kept you back? Could you not afford to go in for a ride?*
I said: Rasulullah ﷺ, by Allah, if I were to sit in the presence of anybody else from amongst the worldly people I would have definitely saved myself from his anger on one pretext (or the other) and I have also the knack to fall into argumentation, but, by Allah, I am fully aware of the fact that if I were to put forward before you a false excuse to please you Allah would definitely provoke your wrath upon me, and if I speak the truth you may be annoyed with me, but I hope that Allah would make its end well and, by Allah, there is no valid excuse for me. By Allah, I never possessed so good means, and I never had such favourable conditions for me as I had when I stayed behind you.

Thereupon, Rasulullah ﷺ said: *This man told the truth, so get up until Allah gives a decision in your case.* I stood up and some people of Banu' Salama followed me in hot haste, and they said to me: By Allah, we do not know about you that you committed a sin prior to this. You, however, showed inability to put forward an excuse before Rasulullah ﷺ as those who stayed behind him have put forward excuses. It would have been enough for the forgiveness of your sin that Rasulullah ﷺ would have sought forgiveness for you. By Allah, they continued to incite me until I thought of going back to Rasulullah ﷺ and contradict myself. Then I said to them: Has anyone else also met the same fate? They said: Yes, two persons have met the same fate as has fallen to you and they have made the sane statement as you have made, and the same verdict has been delivered in their case as it has been delivered in your case. I said: Who are they? They said: Murara ibn ar-Rabi'a 'Amiri and Hilal ibn Umayya al-Waqafi. They made a mention of these two pious persons to me who had participated in the Battle of Badr and there was an example for me in them. I went away when they named these two persons.

Rasulullah ﷺ forbade the Muslims to talk with three of us from amongst those who had stayed behind him. The people began to avoid us and their attitude towards us underwent a change and it seemed as if the whole atmosphere had turned (hostile) against us and it was in fact the same atmosphere ot which I was fully aware and in which I had lived (for a fairly long time). We spent fifty nights in this very state and my two friends confined themselves within their houses and spent (most of the) time in weeping, but as I was young and strong amongst

them I got (out of my house), participated in salaat with jama'ah, moved about in the bazar; but none spoke to me. I came to Rasulullah ﷺ as he sat amongst (people) after the prayer, greeted him and asked myself whether his lips stirred in response to my greetings (or not). Then I observed salaat beside him and looked at him with stealing glances and when I attended to my salaat, he looked at me and when I cast a glance at him he turned away his eyes from me.

And when the harsh treatment of the Muslims towards me extended to a (considerable) length of time, I walked until I climbed upon the wall of the garden of Abu Qatada, and he was my cousin, and I had the greatest love for him. I greeted him but, by Allah, he did not respond to my greetings. I said to him: Abu Qatada, I adjure you by Allah, aren't you well aware of the fact that I love Allah and His Messenger ﷺ the most. He kept quiet. I again repeated saying: I adjure you by Allah. aren't you well aware of the fact that I love Allah and His Messenger ﷺ the most. He kept quiet. I again adjured him, whereupon he said: Allah and the Messenger ﷺ are best aware of it. My eyes began to shed tears and I came back climbing down from the wall and as I was walking in the bazar of Medina a Nabatean from amongst the Nabateans of Syria, who had come to sell food-grains in Madinah, asked people to direct him to Ka'b bin Malik. People gave him the indication by pointing towards me. He came to me and delivered to me a letter of the King of Ghassan and as I was a scribe I read that letter and it was written like this: "Coming to my point, it has been conveyed to us that your friend (the Holy Prophet) is subjecting you to cruelty and Allah has not created you for a place where you are to be degraded and where you cannot find your right place, so you come to us that we should accord you honour. As I read that letter I said: This is also a calamity, so I burnt it in the oven.

When out of the fifty days, forty days had passed and Rasulullah ﷺ received no revelation, there came the messenger of Rasulullah ﷺ to me and said: Verily, Rasulullah ﷺ has commanded you to remain separate from your wife. I said: Should I divorce her or what (else) should I do? He said: *No, but only remain separate from her and don't have sexual contact with her.*

The same message was sent to my companions. So I said to my wife: You better go to your parents and stay there with them until Allah gives the decision in my case. The wife of Hilal ibn Umayya came to Rasulullah ﷺ and said: O Rasulullah, Hilal bin Umayya is a senile person, he has no servant. Do you disapprove of my serving him? He said: *No, but don't go near him.*
She said: By Allah, he has no such instinct in him. By Allah, he spends his time in weeping from that day to this day. Some of the members of my family said to me: Were you to seek permission from Rasulullah ﷺ in regard to your wife as he has granted permission to the wife of Hilal ibn Umayya to serve him. I said: I would not seek permission from Rasulullah ﷺ, for I cannot say what Rasulullah ﷺ may say in response to seeking my permission. Moreover, I am a young man.

It was in this state that I spent ten more nights and thus fifty nights had passed that we were boycotted. It was on the morning of the fiftieth night that I observed my fajr salaat and was sitting on one of the roofs of our houses. And I was in fact sitting in that very state which Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, has described about us in these words:

Life had become hard for myself and the earth had compressed despite its vastness. [3:118]

that I heard the noise of an announcer from the peak of the hill of Sal' saying at the top of his voice: Ka'b bin Malik, there is glad tidings for you.
I fell down in sajdah and came to realise that there was (a message of) relief for me. Rasulullah ﷺ had informed the people of the acceptance of our repentance by Allah as he offered the dawn prayer. So the people went on to give us glad

tidings and some of them went to my friends in order to give them the glad tidings and a person galloped his horse and came from the tribe of Aslam and his horse reached me more quickly than his voice. And when he came to me whose sound I heard, he gave me the glad tidings. I took off my clothes and clothed him with them because of his bringing good news to me and, by Allah, I possessed nothing else than these two on that occasion, and I asked one to lend me two clothes and dressed myself in them.

I came to Rasulullah ﷺ and on my way I met groups of people who greeted me because of (the acceptance of) repentance and they said: Here is a greeting for you for your repentance being accepted by Allah. (I moved on) until I came to the masjid and Rasulullah ﷺ had been sitting there amongst persons. So Talha bin 'Ubaidullah got up and rushed towards me and he shook hands with me and greeted me and, by Allah, no person stood up (to greet me) from amongst the muhajirs except he [Ka'b ؓ said that he never forgot that good gesture of Talha ؓ].

I greeted Rasulullah ﷺ with Assalam-o-'Alaikum and his face was glistening because of delight, and he said: *Let there be glad tidings and blessings for you - for this is the best day you have ever had since the day your mother gave birth to you.* I said: O Rasulullah. Is this acceptance of repentance from you or from Allah? He said: *No, it is from Allah.*

And it was common with Rasulullah ﷺ that as he was happy his face brightened up and it looked like a part of the moon and it was from this that we recognised it (his delight). As I sat before him, I said: O Rasulullah, am I allowed to give in charity my wealth for Allah's sake and for the sake of His Messenger ﷺ? Thereupon Rasulullah ﷺ said: *Keep some property with you as it is better for you.* I said: I shall keep with me that part which fell to my lot in Khaibar. I said: O Rasulullah, verily, Allah has granted me salvation because of truth and, therefore, (I think) that repentance implies that I should not speak anything but truth as long as I live.

By Allah, I do not know whether anyone amongst the Muslims whom Allah put to more severe trial than I because of telling the truth. And since I made a mention of this to Rasulullah ﷺ up to this day I have not told any lie and, by Allah, I have decided not to tell a lie and I hope that Allah would save me (from trials) for the rest of my life and Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, revealed these ayat:

Allah has forgiven the Prophet ﷺ, the muhajirs and the ansaars who followed him in the time of distress (Tabuk expedition), after the hearts of a party of them had nearly deviated, but He accepted their repentance. Certainly, He is to them full of kindness, Most Merciful. And (He did forgive also) the three who did not join till for them the earth, vast as it is, was straitened and their own selves were straitened to them … [9:117-8]

And this revelation reached up to:" …O you who believe! Be afraid of Allah, and be with those who are true (in words and deeds). [9:119]

By Allah, since Allah directed me to Islam there has been no blessing more significant for me than this truth of mine which I spoke to Rasulullah ﷺ and if I were to tell a lie I would have been ruined as were ruined those who told lies, for in regard to those who told lies Allah used harshest words used for anyone as He descended revelation:

They will swear by Allah to you, when you return to them, that you may turn away from them. So turn away from them. Surely, they are impure, and jahannam is their dwelling place – a recompense for that which they used to earn. They (munafiqs) swear to you that you may accept them, but if you are pleased with them, certainly Allah is not pleased with the fasiqs. [9:95-96]

K'ab ﷺ further said:

> The matter of us three persons was deferred as compared with those who took an oath in the presence of Rasulullah ﷺ and he accepted their allegiance and sought forgiveness for them and Allah did not give any decision in regard to us. It was Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, Who gave decisions in our case, three who remained behind. "the three who were left behind" do not mean that we remained back from jihad but these imply that He kept our matter behind them who took oath and presented excuse before Him [4].

61. Narrated by Abu Sa'id Al-Khudriy ﷺ [8]:

> A wolf attacked a sheep and took it away, but the shepherd ran after the wolf and grabbed it from him. The wolf sat down and said: "Don't you fear Allah? How could you grab from me a sustenance which Allah has given me?
> The shepherd then said: "How strange! A wolf talking like a man!"
> The wolf then said to him: "Shall I tell you something which is even stranger? Muhammad ﷺ in Madinah is telling people the news of the previous times in history".
> The shepherd then came leading his sheep until he entered Madinah, and he left his sheep on one side of Madinah. He then came to the Prophet ﷺ and told him about the wolf. Rasulullah ﷺ asked someone to announce among the people that: "A prayer is to be offered in congregation". Rasulullah ﷺ the came out and said to the shepherd: "*Tell them*". The shepherd then told the people about what happened with the wolf.
>
> Rasulullah ﷺ then said: "*He is truthful. I swear by Whom my soul is in His hand, the Hour will not be established until the wild animals talk to man, and the man is spoken to by the tip of his lash and by his shoelace, and his thigh tells him about what his wife did after he left her*".

62. In *Wujooubut Ta'aawun bayal-Muslimeen* [18].

63. Abu Nu'aym in his Hilya.

64. **Da'wah incident of Bi'r-Ma'ana:** Narrated on the authority of Anas ﷺ:

> Rasulullah ﷺ sent seventy men from the tribe of Bani Sulaim to the tribe of Bani Amir. When they reached there, my maternal uncle said to them, "I will go ahead of you, and if they allow me to convey the message of Rasulullah ﷺ; otherwise you will remain close to me."
> So he went ahead of them and the polytheists granted him security. But while he was reporting the message of Rasulullah ﷺ, they beckoned to one of their men who stabbed him to death. My maternal uncle said:
>
> Allahu Akbar! By the Lord of the Kaba, I am successful.
>
> After that they attacked the rest of the party and killed them all except a lame man who went up to the top of the mountain. (Hammam, a sub-narrator said, "I think another man was saved along with him)." Jibril ﷺ informed Rasulullah ﷺ that they met their Lord, and He was pleased with them and made them pleased. We used to recite, "Inform our people that we have met our Lord, He is pleased with us and He has made us pleased" Later on this Quranic Verse was abrogated. Rasulullah ﷺ invoked Allah for forty days to curse the murderers from the tribe of Ril, Dhakwan, Bani Lihyan and Bani Usaiya who disobeyed Allah and his Apostle [3].

65. Bazzaar and Tabraani in his Kabeer, as quoted in Targheeb wat Tarheeb (Val.l Pg.91J.

66. Imam Shams al-Din al-Dhahabi in *Siyar A'lam Al-Nubala'i.*

67. Fataawa 'Ulama' al-Balad al-Haraam.

68. Abu Dāwūd 4338 Sahīh by Al-Albāni.

69. Narrated by Abu Darda. Imam al-Ghazali quotes in his Ihya Ulumuddin.

70. Reported in Tabrani & Targhib as quoted in Muntakhab Ahadith.

71. Qur'an 2:286.

72. Kanzul 'Ummal Hadith No. 5055, Jame' al-Ahadith, No. 33703.

73. Quran 10:85-6.

74. Quran 10:87.

75. Quran 10:88.

76. Sunan Abu Dawud & Saheeh al-Jaami' & Ahmad & Abu Umayyah at-Tarsoose in "Musnad ibn 'Umar". Authenticated by Ibn Taymiyyah in Majmu-Fatawa (29/30).

77. Explained by Maulana Saeed Ahmad Khan ﷺ.

78. These basis are attributed to Bai Iqbal Naiyar who explained them in 1988 Nizamuddin.

79. Quran 11:114

80. Qur'an 8:60.

Words of Maulana Ilyas Khandlawi رحمه الله

What follows now is a series of statements of Maulana Ilyas رحمه الله, which don't follow any kind of order [23].

☰ In the lectures, the whys and the wherefores of the commands of shari'at should not be discussed. People should be taught to keep just the following three things in their minds:

1. In every deed, intention should be to please Allah.
2. To have the belief of the akhira: every deed should be centred on winning the divine pleasure, together with a belief in the akhira. it will be rewarding in the akhira. In the akhira, you will either reap the returns of your [good] deeds, or [at least,] punishment will be forgiven. [99:7-8]
3. There should be no aim of gaining anything before death in this world [from the acts of worship], because these things come by themselves and do not stand primary; and, though these things are guaranteed - and it is necessary to believe that these things will be given - yet it should not be the object of performing an action.

☰ The work is so significant in itself that the sawing of the head [as faced by prophet Zakaria عليه السلام] and the flying sedan of prophet Soliman عليه السلام do not matter in this path.

☰ These days an oft-repeated error in the chapter of deen is that beginnings are regarded as the ultimate and means are given the status of objectives. If we ponder, we will then find that in all branches of deen, this error has become entrenched and is the root cause of thousands evils.

☰ It is related in the hadith:

> *Whosoever does not show mercy, will not be shown mercy. Have mercy upon those on earth and the One in the heaven will show mercy on you.*

It is a pity that people have restricted this mercy to those who are hungry, thirsty and naked, and have no pity on the muslims who are deprived of deen. It is as if they consider the lack of material things to be a loss, but do not consider a lack of deen as such. Therefore, why should the One in the heaven have pity upon us when we do not take pity on the ruined religious conditions of muslims.

The foundation of our tabligh is based upon this pity. Therefore, this work should necessarily be done with compassion and feelings of mercy. If a person goes out for tabligh because of the sad religious state of his fellow muslims pains him, he will certainly perform his duty with compassion and sympathy. However, if he does not have this disposition but has another intention, then he will be involved in pride and self-elation from which no benefit can be expected. The one who will bear this hadith in mind while doing the work will have sincerity, as well as watch over his own failings. While his gaze may fall onto the shortcomings of others, he will not lose sight of their Islamic merits. Such a person will not defend his nafs (lower self) but will blame it. The crux of this tabligh effort is not to favour the self but to keep the lesson of blaming the self in view.

☰ In the beginning of Islam (when deen was weak and dunya was strong), Rasulullah ﷺ used to go to those lacking in the desire for deen and the truth, attend their assemblies and though uninvited, he still gave them the da'wat. He did not wait for the people to invite them. He sent the sahaba ﷺ to do tabligh in some places. In these times, the same weak conditions prevail. Hence, we should go to those who have no desire, to the assemblies of the atheists, sinners, etc., and exalt the Word of Allah ﷻ in their midst.

☰ Respected friends! Time is still left for work. Two great dangers for deen are approaching in the near future. The first one will be a missionary movement of the propagation of disbelief, just like the Shuddi Tehreek (a tyrannical movement in the sub-continent forcing muslims to adopt Hinduism in 1920s), which will travel among the ignorant masses. The second one will be atheism and apostasy, which is coming hand in hand with the western government and political system. These two sources of waywardness will rush like the flood. Therefore, do what you can before these appear.

☰ The method of general religious education and training which we want to spread through this movement of ours, was the only method which existed in the days of Rasulullah ﷺ; in those days, deen used to be learnt and taught generally in this course of action. From then on, all the other methods which were developed for this purpose, e.g., compiling and writing books, education through books, etc. were the creations of circumstances for fulfilling the felt needs. What a pity it is that people now regard these methods as the actual method, whereas the method of the days of Rasulullah ﷺ which is the actual and the best method of general religious education and training, has been forgotten since long.

☰ What is tabligh? Tabligh is the effort of sending every talk of deen to the heart.

☰ Man's nature inclines faster towards despair. This is so because when one becomes despondent, he no longer regards himself responsible for making efforts and therefore remains idle. Understand it well that this is the trap of the shaitan and nafs.

☰ To become despondent on account of lack of means and resources is a sign that you have become worshippers of these resources and that your faith in the promise of Allah and His unseen power is but little. Depending entirely upon Allah and with courage rise to the occasion and Allah will prepare the means otherwise, what can man accomplish by himself? Courage and struggle according to our full capacity is a pre-condition.

☰ The verse "And from what We have provided, they spent…[2:3]" is not confined to riches and wealth but whatever ability, external or internal, given to us by Allah, for example, fikr and raai (thinking and opinion) or hands and feet; these are all gifts from Allah and to utilise them for the work of Allah and for His deen are all included in this verse.

☰ …I decided that whatever external and internal potential Allah has given me, I should utilise for the work on which Rasulullah ﷺ used his strength, i.e. the effort on Allah's servants, especially the negligent and those lacking in urge, to divert them to Allah and to spread the idea to consider life cheap for the sake of propagating the words of Allah. This is our movement and this is what we tell everybody. If this work is established, then a thousand more madrasahs and khanqas (spiritual centres) will be established. In fact, every muslim will become a madrasah and a khanqa in himself. Then the favours brought by Rasulullah ﷺ will be then enjoyed by all the people. This is the right and the prestige of deen that it should reach out to everyone, high and low.

[To someone who made excuse of old age maulana explained:

If in reality you thought yourself competent at first to have power or strength to do something, then at that time you were not fit for the work of Allah. If you have definite certainty that you now have no power or strength and cannot do anything, then you have now become entitled to do Allah's work and to be worthy of attaining Allah's help. It is a condition to acquire Allah's help that man should consider himself completely helpless and have faith that only through Allah can work be done. Without this, no help can be expected from Allah. It is stated in a Hadith Qudsi: "I am with those whose hearts have been broken."

☰ To beg Allah for His grace and sustenance, etc. is mandatory but to seek compensation for worship, service to the creation, etc. in this world is haram.

☰ The stages which Rasulullah ﷺ taught us to achieve by sacrificing our lives or with a keen desire to sacrifice ourselves and whatever sahaba ﷺ had acquired by sacrificing themselves in the path of deen, you people wish to acquire them by only reading the books, lying comfortably in your beds!

☰ This effort is a washer man platform. All types of dirty, foul and filthy clothes come here.

☰ [Said to one of his relatives:] People out there are burning in the fire of ignorance and you are wasting your time here inquiring after my health!

☰ [Once a person presented a purse to him with the request that he used it, exclusively, for his own needs. The Maulana replied:] If we do not regard Allah's work our own, how can we claim to be His bondmen ?

[With a sigh, he added:] Alas! We are not the just appreciators of the sacred Prophet. We do not know his true worth.

☰ When we do not fulfil the commandments of Allah and refrain from the forbidden in our personal lives over which we have full control and there is no obstacle or compulsion, then how is it possible that we be entrusted with the governing of this world?

☰ Only speech has been left. Writing has been left. Religious conferences are the cheating of shaytan. Do this; do that; but doing nothing! Brothers! Until you do not move your feet, the darkness of the heart is not going to finish…

☰ Brothers! At this time disbelief and atheism are very powerful. Under these conditions separate and individual efforts of reform will not work. Hence, with full force and collective effort, the struggle should carry on. "And hold firmly to the rope of Allah collectively…[3:103]"

… ⊜ …

Words of Maulana Yusuf Khandlawi رحمه الله

What follows now is a series of statements of Maulana Yusuf رحمه الله, which don't follow any kind of order [16].

☰ The qualities with which Rasulullah ﷺ passed his life and the qualities with which he performed the effort of deen - the name of these qualities is called tabligh.

☰ Allah ﷻ has kept the success of humanity in their internal strength: Success or failure is the name of the internal condition of the person.

Allah ﷻ has shown how a people is disgraced despite having sovereignty and resources. Also, He had shown honour in need and in poverty. If people's internal yaqin and the a'mal which come out from inside of him become rectified, then Allah ﷻ will create the environment of success, regardless of the poor material quality. From where people see construction, He had shown destruction.

☰ The foundation of circumstance is not mulk and maal [power, means & materials], money or land or rockets etc. Rather the foundation is a'mal. Only the a'mals of prophets, sahaba and ulama will harmonize and rectify our circumstances. Mulk & maal or gold & silver will not rectify our circumstance. Those who believe that gold & silver or mulk & mal will rectify our condition are in deception, the reality is not like this, Allah ﷻ connected success with a'mal, He did not connect condition with any material. The condition will be according to a'mal.

☰ In this path, du'a is accepted like the prophets of Bani Israel. What it means is that just like the way Allah made them successful against the apparent means by using His power of qudrah, and levelled the falsehood with the ground, the same way Allah will manifest His qudrah for the aid of the worker upon his dua, and against the apparent system.

One great danger to this work is to limit it within the structure and form. Then the soul of the work will come out of it. The safety from this is that the worker performs all a'mals of this work by sacrificing the structure and embrace striving and difficulty, and never to leave this form of mujahada. Increase effort among the poor, continue jamat on foot.

People will come and say, "Take, spend this money in the path of Allah". At that time sacrificing the structure will be required. So inform them, "Brother, here we develop the zeal to spend on the correct and sacred way. You will then be able to spend it yourself, so learn the method here."

…The real framework of this effort involves da'wah, gast, talim, tashkil etc. When mashwara is required then only consult those suitable in giving opinions. The people giving mashwara should never be from those detached from the umumi effort.

At the moment Muslims only have the rituals and structure of deen. The aim of this effort of tabligh is that the true soul and essence of deen come to them. They have mutilated organs of deen, the aim of tabligh is that the complete and pure deen come to them in an orderly fashion.

The six qualities upon which a lot of effort and drill is made by tablighi programmes, the aim is to normalise a Muslim life spent upon pure and ordered deen, keeping the commands of Allah and reward and punishment of hereafter in front.

The higher the level of effort made, the more hidaya which will be distributed. When that effort ends hidaya will begin to come out of the Muslims. Firstly hidaya will come out from business transactions, social customs, meaning instead of applying the rules of deen alternative rules and methods will be applied in them, then obligatory duty will come out. In the end, many evil practices will enter. Even Muslims will come out of deen! On the contrary, when the effort of deen is made hidaya begins to come. After that with the increased effort of deen hidaya will spread further.

The aim of our tablighi effort is that Muslims begin to live a life bound by the commands of Allah. It is hoped that by developing the six qualities and habituating in these they will come to the intended condition. This …condition will be realised inshallah if we practice and act according to the meanings, that is through physical effort, tolerating the difficulties and monetary loss, and following the commands of Allah even if it is contrary to human desire and nafs.

What is the field of making effort and striving? People think agriculture-farming, trade-business, career-employment etc. are the fields of effort. Similar, on a second front, collectively they participate in election in order to influence the administration and to get power. However, these things are like a light bulb or an electric fan. We cannot exert effort on the bulb or the fan to turn the light on or turn the fan. Instead, we should reach out to the switch. Similarly, if our relationship with Allah is built, then anything can happen. On the contrary, if our relationship with Allah is not built then despite making an all-out effort the end result will be zero.

People will murder each other and devour, this condition will arise when humans will have passions like animals when they will only live for themselves.

☰ This effort of da'wah accustoms every ummati in a special way of spending their own time and wealth. This is why we must avoid anything that might reduce the level of time and wealth spent in this effort. Otherwise, there is a danger that the people accustomed to this effort will be lured into seeking name, fame etc.

We need to increase the customs peculiar to this effort, to the best of our ability and spread this with tolerance, simplicity, and by imploring and sacrificing temporary and temporal desires. This is the mentality of this effort, this is what we also find in the effort, the methodology of Rasulullah ﷺ and his sahaba ؓ. This effort will progress as much as it conforms to their way, and decline in influence by as much as it is lacking in conformity.

☰ Attaining success in life or in the hereafter is impossible without the a'mals of Rasulullah ﷺ, even if all the worldly means has been accumulated. Rather, worldly means and power, business, farming will be devoid of the soul unless these activities carry the light of the a'mals of Rasulullah ﷺ.

☰ Just as Rasulullah ﷺ had shown how to pray, fast, perform hajj, in the same manner, Rasulullah ﷺ had shown us how to make the effort of deen. Muslims received da'wah of prophets too. Now Muslims think that people just need to earn, eat, get busy with their own pursuits!

☰ Because of our evil deeds our mentality and mindset have become individualistic, whether it involves dunya or deen, our mentality and tastes have become such that our heart only wishes to get busy with personal conditions, we think that in doing so our problems will be solved. On the contrary, as a result of focusing on personal problems, by making effort only on personal issues, our trials and calamities do not decrease. In fact, it will only increase it. Without rectifying the collective problem, solving individual problems is difficult. If a calamity comes as a consequence of collective corruption then it can spoil the condition for everybody.

☰ The Americans made a lot of things, they spent billions to stop the sale of alcohol and tried everything, yet instead of decrease the sale of alcohol increased. Alhamdulillah by the effort of tabligh millions left forbidden acts which they themselves could not imagine possible.

☰ All of the destruction is due because ummah is no longer acting as an ummah; rather they have forgotten what is ummah and how Rasulullah ﷺ built this ummah.

☰ At a time when the whole creation is caught up in distress, and there is no other way except this effort, then the responsibility of our friends has reached beyond the limit. So suppress whatever lowly and humiliating passions that we have, maximise the use of this effort & movement, unwaveringly cry a lot at night in supplication for the whole creation in general and Muslims in particular, with full yaqin and expectation.

☰ If our decisions are pleasing to Allah ﷻ, according to the way of the prophets, then we are sorted. "O Muslims! Change your own character! Change your lifestyles by following the life-styles of prophets. Shape your framework according to them. Replace your efforts with the efforts of prophets."

☰ Every single Muslim, be an alim or saint, elder or hafiz, trader or farmer, labourer or destitute, city dweller or villager, in summery, all the different classes of people of this ummah establish discipline in their life.

☰ The object of the kalima is the change of yaqin, to come out of the yaqin of means and materials to the qualities & attributes of Allah ﷻ, this we have to develop through this kalima. What is the second part, Muhammad Rasulullah, for? That is to shape our system of life the way taught by Rasulullah ﷺ. The more we give da'wah with yaqin, the more yaqin will increase, and the more we recite this kalima with its greatness and due regard while remembering Allah ﷻ, the more yaqin will come to heart.

☰ Knowledge is to know, in every condition, commands for every place, similar to what we practice inside salat, to create the zeal to learn about Him, before performing any action learn about it, how did Rasulullah ﷺ perform this - to learn this if we have to leave our homes, sacrifice our health and wealth, then sacrifice those things. If our condition is like this then this knowledge will lead to correct zeal or emotion.

☰ Whatever does not benefit the deen, save yourselves from that while in this life.

☰ Talk like this: Brother, We are Muslims, We all said "La ilaha illallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah." We believe that Allah ﷻ is our sustainer. Profit-loss, honour-dishonour is in the hands of Allah ﷻ. If we follow the commands of Allah and live our life according to the way of Rasulullah ﷺ, Allah will be happy and make our life. How our life becomes according to commands of Allah and the way shown by Rasulullah ﷺ, regarding this worry and concern a talk is taking place.

☰ Allah ﷻ has set criteria for success. That is same for the king, commander, millionaire, poor, same for everyone, like everyone has passed through the private part of man, everyone then passed through woman, and everyone will be below the ground, in the midst of all insects and stink. Similarly, the criteria for success which apply between birth and death is also the same, ie yaqin and a'mal.

☰ Every Muslim should be honoured for becoming an ummati of Rasulullah ﷺ. Humble in front of every Muslim, be small in front of others, give rights of every person and not expecting that our own rights are served…

One who belittles himself in front of others for Allah's sake, Allah will raise him and give honour. For this, we create a desire in others to do ikram. We need to explain the value of a Muslim. They should hear the stories of excellent character, benevolence and think better of others involving Rasulullah ﷺ and his sahaba ؓ. At the same time practice and habituate to do likewise, and cry to Allah to give us the tawfiq to copy the character of Rasulullah ﷺ.

☰ There are two types of wali of Allah. One is that the person leaves everything to go to mountains, tries to remain holy and approach Allah ﷻ. This is the lower level. The second and better level is to live every branch of life with the qualities of wali. For this, it is necessary that they come out of their businesses in order to build yaqin, ibadah and character. After building this they can go back to worldly life.

Today there is a section of the ummah who display a culture of personal a'mals, and yet that is lifeless. Let the relationship between Allah and His slave be built - and for this end, we are to devote our life and wealth, and never to desire anything from the people upon whom effort is being made.

Doing any action without seeking the pleasure of Allah ﷻ is arrogance and show. To have the asbabs, or increase in asbabs, to get praised by the people, to become great or famous, to be in need by all, to be followed, to get recognised for status, to get consulted - to do an action for any of these reasons is not ikhlas or in the path of Allah. In fact, the sincere slaves of Allah, despite knowing the virtues of a'mal, don't do those for their virtues and promises despite having firm yaqin on them. The reason for this is that the promises will be gained even without making intention for them, but that is not the purpose.

Glossary

A

Akhira: Hereafter. Period after people have been brought back to life, in body and soul, on the Day of Qiyamah.

'Abd: Slave, servant, worshipper.

Abu (or **Abi**): A prefix meaning "father of'.

Adab: Courtesy, etiquette, manners.

Adhan: (or Azan) The public call made before every fardh salat.

'Alamin: Mankind, jinns and all that exists.

'Alim: (pl. 'Ulama) A religious scholar possessing deep knowledge which is also matched by truthfulness and practice.

Allah: Allah is the Creator and Sustainer of all creation and controls everything in the universe. He is the One and Only being worthy of worship Who has no partners or children and is unlike anything we know.

Allahu Akbar: This expression is referred to as the "Takbeer" and commonly translated as "Allah is the Greatest".

A'mal: Act/deed or practice.

Ameer: Leader.

Amir-ul-mu'mineen: The term means "Leader of the Believers" and this title is reserved for Muslim Rulers. It was first used for 'Umar ﷺ.

Ansar: Helpers. Muslims during the time of Rasulullah ﷺ who were native inhabitants of Madinah and who helped the muhajirs who migrated. Singular is ansari.

'Aqeedah: The faith, creed and beliefs of the Muslims.

Asbab: Means of accomplishing something. It could be either apparent or worldly, eg. factories, skill, job, food, medicine iron and gold; or it could be deeni or hidden, eg. support of Allah ﷻ, salat, patience, taqwa, dua.

As-Salamu 'Alaikum: Muslim greeting meaning "Peace be upon you."

Auliya': Friends of Allah.

Ayah: (pl Ayat) A verse of the Qur'an **or** the natural signs in the universe that inform one about the existence and Oneness of Allah **or** miracles of the prophets. In many verses, all three meanings can be assumed.

B

Baitul Muqaddas (al-Quds, Jerusalem): This ancient city is famous in the Muslim world because the Masjidul Aqsa in it.

Bani Isra'el: The children of Isra'el. Isra'el was the title of Ya'qoob ﷺ, who was the son of Is'haq ﷺ and the grandson of Ibrahim ﷺ . The Bani Isra'el are therefore the descendants of Ya'qoob ﷺ, commonly known as the Jews.

Barakah: Blessings.

Bay'ah: A pledge of allegiance.

Bid'ah: An act or a belief that is not part of deen, but understood as such.

-bin-: This word appearing between two names means "the son of'.

-bint-: This word appearing between two names means "the daughter of'.

Bismillah: The act of reciting 'Bismillah" or 'Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem" (In the name of Allah, The Beneficiant, The Merciful).

Bukhari: The most authoritative hadith compilation by Imam Bukhari ﷺ.

D

Dajjal: Great deceiver. Anti-Christ. Rasulullah ﷺ mentioned that he will appear before the Day of Qiyamah and lead the Kuffar armies against the Muslim armies. 'Eesa ﷺ will eventually kill him.

Da'eef: Weak. A hadeeth that has not met the criteria of sahih.

Da'wah: An invitation or call. It describes the act of inviting people towards Islam.

Day of Qiyamah: Last Day. The day this world will come to an end and everything besides Allah will die.

Deen: Although this term refers to the religion of Islam as we know it today, it is also used to refer to any true religion of the past, which Allah taught man through His prophets. The religions of the previous prophets are also referred to as Islam.

Deeni: Related to the deen.

Dhikr: (pl. Adhkar) Remembrance of Allah to remain concious of Him in all actions. However, it is often used for the formal repetition of words by which Allah is remembered, such as repeating the words "La Ilaaha Illalah", or "Allahu Akbar", etc.

Dinaar: A coin made of pure gold that was used as a form of currency. It was equal to approximately 4.25g of gold.

Dirham: A coin made of pure silver that was used as a form of currency, It is equal to approximately 3.lg of silver.

Du'a: A supplication or prayer to Allah.

Dunya: World. Also means temporary, tempting worldly possessions.

Durood: Also referred to as a salat on Rasulullah ﷺ. Sending salutations to Rasulullah ﷺ by reciting certain formulations, which all invoke Allah to shower his choicest mercies on him.

E

Ehsan: Goodness, Favour.

'Eid: Muslim religious festival.

Eman: Belief. Eman means believing in tawheed and the prophethood of Rasulullah ﷺ together with everything else that he ﷺ taught.

F

Fasiq: An evil person, defiantly disobedient.

Fahsha': Great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.

Faqih: (pl. Fuqaha) Recognised jurists of Islam. The term generally refers to the four famous imams of the four schools of jurisprudence.

Fatwa: (pl. Fatawa) A ruling or verdict passed by a Mufti stating the legal status of an act.

Fikr: Worry, concern.

Fiqh: Islamic jurisprudence.

Fir'awn: Pharaoh. In Qur'anic terms, it refers to the king of Egypt during the time of Musa ﷺ.

Fisq: (pl. Fusuq) Immorality, transgression, wickedness.

Fitna: (pl. Fitan) Literally, it means to find out the purity or impurity of precious metals like gold or silver by melting it on fire. Melting the metal on fire reveals the reality. In general, it is used very broadly to refer to temptation, test, trial, chaos and dissension depending on context.

G

Ghayb: The Unseen, those matters beyond our senses.

H

Hafidh: (pl. Huffadh) A person who has memorised the entire Qur'an.

Hadhrat: A term of respect used before the name of a person.

Hadith: The words or actions of Rasulullah ﷺ, which are narrated by his sahaba ﷺ.

Hadeth Qudsi: A hadeeth in which Rasulullah ﷺ narrates from Allah.

Hajj: The pilgrimage of Muslims that occurs during the month of Dhul Hijjah.

Halal: Something that is lawful in the shari'ah.

Halat: Trial & tribulation.

Haram: Something that the shari'ah clearly declares unlawful and prohibited.

Hasan: A hadeeth that has met the criteria of authenticity to a sufficient level as would allow it to be used as legal proof.

Hidaya: Guidance, especially the guidance Allah gives people to do good.

Hijrah: To migrate from one place to another for the pleasure of Allah. Hijrah is compulsory when it is difficult or impossible for a Muslim to practice Islam in the place where he lives. It also refers to the migration of Rasulullah ﷺ from Makkah to Madinah.

Hoor: Pleasure mates in jannah.

I

Ibada: An act of worship e.g. salat, hajj, charity, etc.

Iblees: The name of the chief shaitan.

Ibn: Literally 'the son of'.

Ihtisab: Sincere hope of gaining promised reward.

Ijtihad: Applying one's mind to the source references of the shari'ah to deduce rulings. Its restricted to qualified individuals.

Ijma': Consensus of opinion.

Ikhlas: Sincerity.

Ikram: Respect for others.

Ilah: (pl. Aaliha) Deity. The Being whom one worships.

'Ilm: Knowledge.

Imam: Model, exemplar. In the shari'ah it means religious leader, one who leads the salat in jama'ah or leads a community.

Insha-Allah: "God willing" or "If Allah wills".

Islam: Peace, surrender. Islam teaches one to surrender or submit himself to Allah's commands.

J

Jahannam: Hell or Hellfire. This is a physical place where people will be punished after the Day of Qiyamah.

Jahiliyya: Pre-Islamic ignorance. Condition of a people before the guidance of Allah reaches them, or the state of a people that prevents them from accepting the guidance of Allah.

Jama'ah: Congregation. Congregational salat.

Janazah: Funeral prayer, funeral procession.

Jannah: (pl. Jannat) Paradise. It is a physical place of happiness where people with eman will live forever after the Day of Qiyamah.

Jibrael: The archangel Gabriel. He is the leader of all the angels and was responsible for bringing revelation to prophets.

Jihad: Literally "to make an effort"' or "to exert oneself". Therefore, although a physical battle between the Muslims and the kafirs is called Jihad, any other effort that a Muslim makes for the promotion of the deen is called Jihad.

Jinn: A creation of Allah very much like human beings, except that their origin is from fire. They can assume any form, have amazing powers and are invisible to the human eye. Since they have free-will, there are Muslim and non-Muslim jinns.

Jumu'a: Friday congregational prayer.

K

Kafir: (pl. Kaafiroon or Kuffar) Disbeliever or rejecter of faith. This term refers to any person who does not have eman. Therefore, Jews and Christians may be referred to as Kaafiroon. Although all mushriks may be called Kaafiroon, all Kaafiroon cannot be called mushriks.

Ka'bah: Also referred to as "Baitullah" ("Allah's house"), the Ka'bah is a cube-shaped building situated in the Masjid-ul-Haram in the city of Makkah. It is towards the Kabah that Muslims face when performing salat.

Kalimah: The testimony of belief that Muslims recite to confirm their eman. The words of the kalimah are "La Ilaaha Illal Lahu Muhammadur Rasulullah" (There is none worthy of worship but Allah and Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah).

Khalifa: (pl. Khulafa) A title used for the Muslim ruler. Alternative spelling 'Caliph'.

Khidmah: To serve.

Khilaafa: Term of serving as khalifa.

Khulafa Rashideen: "The rightly guided Khulafa". According to consensus of the ummah, the "Khulafa Rashideen" refers to Abu Bakr, 'Umar, Uthman and Ali ﷺ.

Kibr: Pride.

Kisra: A title used for the emperors of the Persian Empire.

Kufr: Disbelief. Kufr is the opposite of eman so when it is stated that a person commits kufr, it means that he either disbelieves in Allah, the prophet of the time (prophet Muhammad ﷺ in our times) or whatever brought by him.

L

La Ilaaha Illallah: The first part of the kalimah, translated as "There is none worthy of worship but Allah".

Lawh al-Mahfuz: Protected Tablet. It is a book in the heavens where Allah has

recorded every event that has taken place and that is to take place.

M

Madinah: A city in Arabia. Rasulullah ﷺ migrated to Madinah after he was compelled to leave Makkah and he lived there until his demise. He is buried in Madinah.

Madrasa: A college for Islamic instruction, seminary.

Makkah: A city in Arabia where Rasulullah ﷺ was born. It is also referred to as Bakkah. The Kabah is situated in this city.

Maktab: School.

Manhaj: Methodology.

Mashwara: Consultation.

Masjid: (pl. Masajid) Mosque. Masjid is a place where Muslims perform their salat in congregation.

Masjid al-Aqsa: Grand masjid at Jerusalem.

Masjidul Haraam: The Masjid surrounding the Kabah.

Masjidun Nabawi: Translated as the "Masjid of Rasulullah ﷺ " is the Masjid in Madinah that was built during the time of Rasulullah ﷺ and where his grave is today.

Maulana: Our master. This is said in respect of ulama, mostly used in Central Asia and in the Indian subcontinent.

Mawla: Patron, Supporter and Protector, etc.

Mina: A place situated approximately 4km outside Makkah.

Mu'adhin: (or mu'azzin) The person who calls out the adhan. Also spelt as mu'azzin.

Mudhakira: Discussion.

Muhajir: (pl. Muhajireen) This term refers to a person who makes hijrah i.e, who migrates for the pleasure of Allah. The term Muhajir is generally used to refer to the first Muslims who migrated from Makkah to Madinah.

Muhammad ﷺ: The last prophet whom Allah sent to mankind. He was born in Makkah in 570ce and passed away in Madinah in 632ce. All Muslims must follow his teachings.

Muhaddith: (pl. muhaddithun) Scholar of hadeeth.

Mujahid: (pl. Mujahidoon) Anyone who engages in the various forms of jihad including fighting for the sake of Allah.

Mujahada: Striving in the path of Allah.

Mu'min: (pl. Mu'mineen) A person who has firm eman.

Munafiq: Hypocrite - A kafir who feigns faith.

Munkar: Disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed, etc.

Mushrik: A person who commits shirk. Polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah.

Muslim: Literally means "one who has surrendered his will to Allah". A Muslim then follows the deen of Islam.

Muttaqi: The pious believers who fear Allah much (abstains from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained).

N

Nabi: (pl. Ambiya) A prophet whom Allah sends to guide people. They were sinless (free from many slanders by the Christians and Jews) and fulfilled their duties.

Nafs: Soul. The term more specifically refers to the evil dimension of the soul. It is also translated as 'carnal passions'.

Nubuwwah: Prophethood. Synonym of risalah.

Nur: Light, Effulgence.

P

Pordah: (or Purdah) Veil or curtain.

Q

Qabr: Grave.

Qadar: Allah's decree of all matters in accordance with His prior knowledge and as dictated by His wisdom.

Qiyamah: Literally means rising. The day when we shall all be raised - be resurrected.

Qudrah: Literally means power, ability, capacity.

Qur'an: The final divine scripture which Allah revealed to Rasulullah ﷺ in the Arabic language in 114 chapter. It is also commonly referred to as Kitabullah ("The Book of Allah").

Quraysh: The Arab tribe that dominated Makkah during the time of Rasulullah ﷺ. Other Arab tribes held them in high regard. Rasulullah ﷺ belonged to this tribe.

R

Rabb: Although normally translated as "Lord', this translation falls far short of explaining the meaning of the word Rabb. The word Rabb refers to the Being Who creates, nurtures, sustains, controls and owns the entire creation. There is therefore no English word that can adequately translate it.

Rahmah: Allah's mercy.

Raka'a: A unit of salat. The salat of a Muslim usually comprises of several raka'as.

Rasool: (pl. Rusul) Messenger. Messengers receive their own shari'ah and are commanded to convey them whereas Prophets receive revelation but not commanded to convey.

Rasulullah: The messenger of Allah. This term is widely used exclusively to refer to Rasulullah ﷺ in the context of Islam.

Riba: Interest paid on loans, monetary or otherwise.

Rizq: Provisions, sustenance.

S

Sabr: Patience, steadfastness.

Sadaqa: Charity given for the pleasure of Allah. Zakat is compulsory.

Sahabi رضي الله عنه: (pl. Sahaba رضي الله عنهم) A companion of Rasulullah ﷺ. The term refers to any person who saw Rasulullah ﷺ and who lived and died as a Muslim.

Saheeh: Healthy, sound, authentic, correct. A hadeeth that has met the criteria of authenticity and can be used as a legal proof.

Sakarat al-Maut: Agony of death.

Sakeenah: Tranquillity.

Salaf: Predecessors, commonly employed to refer to the first three generations of Muslims.

Salah: (pl. salat) The second pillar of Islam. It involves a set routine of recitation, supplication & utterance while standing, bowing, prostration and sitting.

Salam: 1 - The greetings that a Muslims give to another Muslim.
2 - The final movement of salat.
3 - The act of sending salutation upon Muhammad ﷺ.

Sawm: One of the pillars of Islam. Refraining from food, drink, sexual desires, foul talks etc. from dawn to dusk with the intention of fulfilling the command of Allah ﷻ.

Seerah: Literally biography. Seerah al-Nabawiyya (or just seerah now) refers to the study of the life of Muhammad ﷺ.

Shaam: Modern-day Syria, Palestine, Israel, Jordan and Lebanon.

Shahada: A testimony of belief. The words of the Shahada are: "Ash Hadu Alla Ilaaha Illallahu wa Ash Hadu Anna Muhammadan Abduhu wa Rasooluh" ("I testify that there is none worthy of worship but Allah and I testify that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and messenger.

Shaheed: A martyr.

Shari'ah: The code of law that governs the lives of Muslims. The term may also be used for past nations which followed other prophets.

Shaykh: Literally old man. Stands for learned person, scholar.

Shaitan: This term refers specifically to the devil shaitan, Iblees, who is a jinn. However, it is also used generally for all other individuals from jinn and mankind who create mischief.

Shifa: Cure.

Shirk: Polytheism. "Shirk" is the opposite of tawheed. Shirk refers to worshipping several deities, whether Allah is included among these or not. It also includes attributing such qualities to others, which belong to Allah alone. For example, it will be said that a person is committing "Shirk" if s/he believes that a being besides Allah can see and hear everything.

Siddeeq: (pl. Siddeeqeen) Literally translated as "one who is extremely truthful". People closest to the ambiya ﷺ who accepted their message without hesitation.

Subhanallah: Glory be to Allah. Usually said to express that Allah is totally without any partners, free of imperfections. It is generally referred to as "Tasbeeh" and may also be used to express astonishment.

Sunnah: (pl. Sunan) The word literally means "a practice" and refers to a practice of Rasulullah ﷺ. The term "Sunnah" may also be used as a collective noun to refer to all the practices and teachings of rasulullah ﷺ. It may also be used for the practices of other people such as the sahaba ﷺ. However, in such cases it will not be used by itself e.g. it will be said "the Sunnah of the sahaba ﷺ" or "the Sunnah of our predecessors".

Surah: A chapter of the Qur'an. There are 114 surahs in the Qur'an.

T

Tabi'i: (pl. Tabi'een) Muslims who saw or met one of the sahaba ﷺ.

Tabi'i't-tabi'i: One who met a tabi'i.

Tabligh: This term refers to propagating Islam.

Tafsir: Elucidation, clarification, explanation of the Qur'an.

Taghut: All that is falsely worshipped besides Allah.

Tahajjud: Non-obligatory salat performed between the Isha and Fajr salat, preferably just before dawn.

Taqdeer: Predestination. Everything good and bad has been predestined by Allah. While Allah has given man a choice to do good or bad, the outcome is known to Him.

Taqwa: Fear for Allah. Piety. Taqwa refers to such consciousness of Allah or piety that drives a person to carry out all Allah's commands and to stay away from everything that Allah has prohibited.

Tarbiya: The process of educating, nurturing, and developing individuals and societies at large.

Targheeb: Gentle encouragement.

Tarheeb: Warning, terrify.

Tasbeeh: (pl. Tasbeehat) Glorifying Allah using words like "Subhanallah", "Subhana Rabbiyal A'la" ("Glory be to my Rabb, the Most High") and other similar words.

Taufiq: Ability to do good.

Tawaf: The act of walking around the Ka'bah seven times in an anti-clockwise direction.

Tawakkul: The term refers to placing one's trust in Allah and to rely only on Allah under all circumstances.

Tawheed: Usually translated as "Oneness of Allah" or "Islamic monotheism". Tawheed refers to worshipping Allah Only and firmly believing that the qualities of a deity belong only to Him.

U

Umm: A prefix meaning "mother of".

Ummah: The word literally means "nation". The Ummah of Rasulullah ﷺ refers to his followers.

Umm-ul-Mu'mineen: (pl. Ummahaatul Mu'mineen) Mother of the Mu'mineen. A title used for the wives of Rasulullah ﷺ.

Umrah: A 'minor' pilgrimage to Makkah. It can be done at any time during the year.

Usool-e-Fiqh: Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence.

W

Wahi: This refers to the revelation that Allah sent to His prophets.

Wali: Patron, friend.

Y

Ya'juj and Ma'juj: Gog and Magog. Ya'juj and Ma'juj are powerful human tribes who will reach climax after the descend of Jesus عليه السلام.

Yaqin: Conviction or certainty at the core of the heart. In Arabic, a water inside a cave unaffected by external environment. Three levels of yaqin are:
(1) Yaqin of knowledge
(2) Yaqin of observation
(3) Yaqin of truth.

Z

Zakat: Normally referred to as a "poor due". The zakat amount is calculated at 2.5% of their surplus wealth.

Zina: Fornication or adultery.

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